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IMPLEMENTING IDEOLOGIES:

Examining the Local Women's Movement in Jordan (2015-2018)

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**Implementing Ideologies:
Examining the Local Women's Movement in Jordan (2015-2018)**

by

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Dedication

To the inspiring women of Jordan.

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Abstract

Implementing Ideologies: Examining the Local Women's Movement in Jordan

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Jordanian society stands at a crossroads. Steps to improve the status of women in Jordan, like the removal of Article 308, have had resounding success. At the same time, Jordan still contends with conservative discourse surrounding the proper place of women in society. Women's rights organizations in Jordan have historically shared strong ties to the Jordanian government as well as international donors. The connection between women's organizations, international donors, and the Jordanian government remains today. However, women's organization possess a level of autonomy that allows them to tailor their messaging to connect with members of Jordanian society, and create organizational partnerships that successfully create political, social, and ideological change in Jordan.

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Introduction

The Amman, Jordan office of Sisterhood is Global¹ buzzed with excitement on August 1, 2017. After a year of campaigning and lobbying, the Lower House of the Jordanian Parliament voted to entirely abolish Article 308 of the Penal Code. In certain cases, Article 308 allowed for the pardoning of sexual assault perpetrators if they married their victims. Members of parliament had enthusiastically debated and some representatives had fought to amend the article instead of abolishing the article.² So, when the House announced the article's abolition, the women standing outside of Parliament celebrated a victory without compromise. To the women and men that supported the abolition of Article 308, this day represented an important step in the fight for gender equality in Jordan.

Title VII of the 1960 Jordanian Penal Code was titled "Offenses against Public Ethics and Morality." Chapter 1 of Title VII was titled "Offenses against Honor" and encompassed the topics of rape, sexual intercourse with women under 18-years-of-age, abduction and seduction. The chapter "Offenses against Honor" details these offenses in 17 articles, numbered from 292-308. Prior to August 2017, the first chapter on "Honor" in the Jordanian Penal Code ended with Article 308. Article 308 covered the

¹ The **Sisterhood Is Global Institute** (SIGI) is an international non-governmental organization. For almost three decades, SIGI has been a consultant to the [United Nations](#).

(Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sisterhood_Is_Global_Institute)

² Rana Hussein, "In a historic vote, House abolishes controversial Article 308," *The Jordan Times*, August 1, 2017, Retrieved from <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/historic-vote-house-abolishes-controversial-article-308>

discontinuation and resumption of legal prosecution for the crimes listed in Chapter 1 and begins:

If a valid marriage is concluded between the perpetrator of one of the crimes provided in this Chapter and the victim, the prosecution shall be discontinued, and the execution of any sentence rendered against the perpetrator shall be stayed.³

Article 308's location within the 1960 Jordanian penal code allowed the law to be applied to any case of rape, abduction, or seduction. In 2015 after years of lobbying from women's rights organizations, The Royal Committee for Developing the Judiciary and Enhancing the Rule of Law (RCDJERL) officially proposed the entire repeal of Article 308. The eventual success of the campaign to repeal Article 308 represented another step in a long history of women's rights activism in the Middle East. Over time, the efforts of activists in Jordan resulted in a rise in the number of female parliament members, organized protests against gender-based violence, and the repeal of potentially discriminatory laws, like Article 308.

Today members of the Jordanian royal family, including Queen consort of Jordan Rania Al-Abdullah and Princess Basma bint Talal, advocate for women's issues in Jordan. In addition, multiple semi-governmental organizations exist for women such as The Jordanian National Commission for Women, the Jordanian National Forum for Women and the General Federation of Jordanian Women.⁴ Despite the support from

³ "Jordan Penal Code No. 16 of 1960," King Hussein Foundation Information and Research Center, date accessed April 20, 2017, 34. <http://haqqi.info/en/haqqi/legislation/jordanian-penal-code-no-16-1960>

⁴ "Jordanian National Forum for Women" Her Royal Highness Basma Bint Talal, date accessed December 2017, http://www.princessbasma.jo/index.php?page_type=pages&page_id=486. Both the JNCW and JNFW are considered semi-governmental organization because they are headed by a member of the Jordanian Royal Family. Her Royal Highness Basema Bint Talal, the paternal aunt of King Abdullah II, heads both organizations.

members of the royal family in Jordan, gender equality still faces challenges due to traditional beliefs that have deep roots in cultural discourse. According to a study conducted by Pew Research Center (2012), 63% of people in Jordan support the general principle of gender equality.⁵ A few lines later, the same report states that Jordanians feel less enthusiastic about the idea of gender parity in politics, economics, and family life. These statistics reveal a key challenge facing women's rights organizations in Jordan: While a majority of people may support the idea of gender equality in the abstract sense, they may resist the actual implementation of programs focused on gender equality into Jordanian economic, political and family life.

Women have achieved many positive gains for gender equality in Jordan over the past decades, including higher representation by females in Jordan's Parliament and the repeal of Article 308. However, patriarchal attitudes and conservative ideologies in Jordan have created a complex social discourse that women's organizations must navigate. This study will examine how women's rights organizations engage the complex and diverse discourse present in Jordan, work to change discriminatory laws and practices, and challenge the ideologies that restrict women. The success of the campaign against Article 308 will serve as the primary case study and demonstrate how women in Jordan effectively create change in their community. The study focuses on sources including social media posts, news articles, and interviews published between 2015 to 2018. The year 2015 marks the beginning of a civil coalition by Sisterhood is Global to

⁵ Pew Research Center, *Global Attitudes Project. Most Muslims Want Democracy, Personal Freedoms and Islam in Political Life*, (2012), 1, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2012/07/10/most-muslims-want-democracy-personal-freedoms-and-islam-in-political-life/>.

remove Article 308 and the beginning of heavy media coverage of the issue by local Jordanian news outlets. This study will begin with the history of the gender equality movement in Jordan and outline the opportunities and barriers facing the movement today. Chapter 2 will identify key issues and the primary objectives of women's organizations in Jordan. Chapter 3 continues with an analysis of the communication strategies utilized by women's organizations. This study will conclude with a case study of Article 308. The case study will demonstrate the effectiveness of efforts by women's organizations to create change in Jordan.

The communication and media analysis presented in this study will focus on three organizations in Jordan. The first is The Arab Women's Association (AWO) of Jordan, a non-governmental organization (NGO) founded in 1970. AWO runs the Mosawa Network in Jordan, which includes 86 registered NGO's. According to AWO's website, the network "provides the opportunity to each member organization to undertake whatever actions it plans for and remain united within the Network."⁶ The role of AWO as a leader in uniting women's organizations in Jordan makes them an important organization to include in this study. Partnerships and coalitions between women's organizations play a key part in the success of the movement for equal rights in Jordan.

The second organization highlighted in this study is the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU). JWU is one of the oldest women's activist organizations in Jordan and was founded in 1945. Political unrest taking place in Jordan forced the JWU to disband

⁶ "Mosawa Network," Arab Women's Association, last modified 2016, <http://awo.org.jo/en/mosawa-network/>.

between 1957-1954 and 1981-1994. Nikki Keddie, author of *Women in the Middle East: Past and Present*, characterizes the JWU as an independent organization that countered the state-sponsored General Federation of Jordanian Women.⁷ The enduring nature of the JWU in the face of political pressure provides a clear example of an organization resisting government influence. JWU provides an important counterbalance to the assumption scholars make about the lack of autonomy women's organizations have in Jordan.

Sisterhood is Global Institute-Jordan (SIGI) completes the list of organizations highlighted in this study. Jordanian activist and lawyer Asma Khader founded SIGI in 1998. The organization has a very active online media presence and posts daily news stories and reports concerning women's rights in Jordan. SIGI's impressive online presence and my own personal work experience with the organization will enable a deeper look at the fight for women's rights on the grassroots level.

Women's rights organizations in Jordan have historically shared strong ties with the Jordanian government and international donors. While this connection still exists, women's organization possess a level of autonomy that allows them to protect the international media representation of the communities they serve, tailor their messaging to connect with Jordanian society, and create organizational partnerships that successfully create political, social, and ideological change in Jordan. The abolition of Article 308 represents just one of the many advances women in the Jordan have gained in the last few decades. In the 2016 Jordanian elections, 20 women won parliamentary seats, which

⁷ Nikki R Keddie, *Women in the Middle East: Past and Present* (Princeton University Press, 2017), 135.

increased from 18 seats in the previous election.⁸ However, before embarking further on the exploration of how these women achieved these accomplishments, I will briefly outline the development of the discourse surrounding women's rights in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENDER EQUALITY DISCOURSE

Beginning in the 1900's, both women and men in the Middle East engaged in the discussion about gender equality. Scholars of the Middle East have examined the theological arguments and social benefits of promoting the status of women and have examined women's status and role in social and religious movements such as Arab nationalism, secularism, and fundamentalism.⁹ This introduction will categorize the discourse surrounding gender equality in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) into three waves of thought. The first-wave of discourse surrounding gender equality linked women's rights to the health and development of the nation. The second-wave of thinkers identified gender equality as an ideal rooted in the sacred scripture of Islam, the Qur'an. The third-wave of thinkers currently engage in multiple areas of Islamic thought to address gender inequality and encourage thinking about women's rights in new ways.

The Middle Eastern discussion surrounding the status and rights of women developed while the MENA experienced a variety of political and ideological structures

⁸ Olivia Cuthbert, "Women gain ground in Jordan election despite yawning gender gap," *The Guardian*, September 22, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/sep/23/jordan-election-women-gain-ground-gender-gap>.

⁹ Margot Badran, *Feminism in Islam: Secular and Religious Convergences*, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2009), 17.

including colonialism, nationalism, modernization and fundamentalism. The coinciding development of both women's rights and national identity has led to a key idea in the discourse surrounding women, which is that women represent the authenticity and future of society. In Laura Lengal's study of women musicians in Tunisia, Lengal describes how women represented opposing political goals at the same time: "The French colonial administration viewed women to be the instrument for modernization and cultural assimilation; for Tunisian male nationalists, they were symbols of Arab Muslim cultural authenticity."¹⁰ The case in Tunisia presents one example of how, in the face of foreign cultural influence, the position of women in society played a key role in creating and defending national identity.

In first-wave feminist discourse, both nationalists and fundamentalists in the early to mid 20th century believed women held a special position as bearers of culture. Women played a critical role in the family and helped shape the future of a nation. Egyptian nationalist leader Qasim Amin (1865-1908) primarily argued for the rights of women by showing how the education of women would lead to productive nations and communities. To support his argument, he also reasoned that educating women would create healthier marriages because educated women were able to share in the emotional and intellectual lives of their husbands.¹¹ Later scholars on women and activism in the Middle East, like Leila Ahmed, have critiqued Amin's portrayal of Egyptian society. She writes that Amin

¹⁰ Laura Lengal, "Resisting the Historical Locations of Tunisian Women Musicians," *Gender & History* 12 no. 2 (July 2000): 339.

¹¹ Qāsim Amin, *The Liberation of Women and The New Woman* (Cairo, Egypt: The American University in Cairo Press, 2000), 18.

compared Egyptian society to Western society, which reinforced orientalist ideas about women, Islam and the Middle East.¹² While many scholars and activist have attempted to discuss women's rights outside of the health of the nation and family, this discourse remains a part of the discussion of women's rights in the Middle East. The call for the education of women continued to exist in other ideologies including conservative fundamentalist discourse. Zaynab Al-Ghazali (1917-2005), an Egyptian activists aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, grounded her arguments for women's education in the desire to protect and spread Islam. Ghazali argued that women must be well educated in politics and religion in order to educate their children to correctly understand Islam and politics.¹³ Despite different ideologies and goals, the representation of women as the keepers of culture and authentic society appear in almost every political movement of the Middle East at that time. The discourse linking women in the Middle East to the health of the family remains prevalent today and will appear throughout this study of women's rights in Jordan.

Second-wave thinkers on women in Islam, including Riffat Hassan and Amina Wadud, built feminist thought by arguing not only that women represent a foundational element of strong communities, but that gender equality is a foundational element of the

¹² Leila Ahmed, *A Quiet Revolution: The Veil's Resurgence, from the Middle East to America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

¹³ miriam cooke, "Ayyam min Hayati: The Prison Memoirs of a Muslims Sister," In *Postcolonial Crescent: Islam's Impact on Contemporary Literature*, ed. John C. Hawley (New York: Peter Lang Inc, 1998), 152.

Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet.¹⁴ They also sought to remove the patriarchal readings of the Qur'an and patriarchal biases that influenced other aspect of Islamic thought such as the Hadith and exegesis. In addition, second wave feminist thinkers began to clearly define specific methods of feminist interpretation. These methods include the historical contextualization method, the intratextual method, and the tawhidic paradigm as presented by Aysha Hidayatullah.¹⁵ These methods offer new ways that allow for readings of the Qur'an that support gender quality.

Second-wave feminists grounded ideas of gender equality in Islam and emphasized the egalitarian aspects of Islamic scripture. These new approaches to reading the sacred texts of Islam offered new ways for scholars to frame discussions of gender equality. However, the methods of second-wave scholars focused heavily on the Qur'an itself and when scholars did engage other sources of Islamic thought, like the Hadith, their methods lacked consistency.¹⁶ Critiques of first-wave and second-wave thinkers include the continued linking of women to their domestic roles and the inconsistent lack of engagement with sources outside of the Quran.

Third-wave thinkers utilize and engage all forms of Islamic thought to address gender equality, and have sought to bring theoretical and methodological consistency into the interpretation of Islamic texts. Scholars like Kecia Ali argue for the rethinking not only of how the scripture is read but to also rethink how Islamic thought and law is

¹⁴ Amina Wadud, *Qur'an and Women: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) and Riffat Hassan, "Challenging the Stereotypes of Fundamentalism: An Islamic Feminist Perspective," *The Muslim World* (2001) v.91, no.1-2, 55-70.

¹⁵ Aysha Hidayatullah, *Feminist Edges of the Qur'an* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 8

¹⁶ Hidayatullah, *Feminist Edges of the Qur'an*, 84.

created.¹⁷ Third-wave scholars not only encourage a rethinking among Muslims about women and Islam but also discuss how the influence of Western scholarship and activism has influenced the portrayal of women in the Middle East. In *Do Muslim Women Need Saving*, author Lila Abu-Lughod critiques Western feminism. Abu Lughod argues that feminism in the twenty-first century enforces orientalist stereotypes and depict Muslim women as oppressed and in need of Western intervention in their lives.¹⁸ The discussion between scholars of gender and religion continues to develop today. This study will show that women in Jordan continue to engage with a variety of ideas from each wave of thought about and apply them to the relationship between women, religion, and society in the Middle East.

Women's organizations must also grapple with barriers created by the dichotomy of East/West that saturates scholarship and media. The history of Western interference and exploitation of the Middle East under the guise of "civilizing or liberating" dates back to the colonization of the Middle East by imperial powers like Britain and France. Similar agendas continue today as politicians in the United States use the "liberation of Muslim women" as justification for military intervention in the Middle East. Fundamentalist leaders in the Middle East claim that women's entrance into the public sphere demonstrates the influence of The West. The example of how the French and Tunisian nationalists used women for political purposes demonstrates the complexities

¹⁷ Kecia Ali, *Sexual Ethics & Islam Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith, and Jurisprudence* (Oneworld Publications, 2010).

¹⁸ Lila Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* (Harvard University Press, 2013).

women's rights activists must navigate. Lengal describes the situation facing women in the Middle East thus:

MENA (Middle East and North Africa) women performers are positioned in a more fluid space, the range of cultural codes and constructions that exists somewhere in between the bipolar opposites of "East/West," historical/contemporary, oppressed/empowered under Islam. What is important for both international feminisms and for performance studies is to break down the ends of these reductionist spectra. To do so, we can learn from women's complex contexts in the MENA region and acknowledge and explore the spaces in between.¹⁹

Lengal specifically discusses women musicians in the Middle East but the description of women existing and navigating in an in-between space helps in understanding the social situation women's rights organizations must navigate. Groups that oppose certain rights for women can dismiss the call for equality as the influence of the West and therefore not authentic to Arab culture. Women must argue that the call for women's equality does not have its roots in Western ideology but instead is rooted in the culture of their own society.

The need for women's rights organizations in the Middle East to distance themselves from Western women's organizations creates an interesting relationship between women's organizations that will be explored further in Chapter 1. It is imperative for understanding the autonomy of grassroots women's organizations in Jordan that we understand the dichotomy activists must engage with and ultimately overcome. As Laura Lengal argues in the context of women musicians, I also believe we

¹⁹ Laura Lengal, "Performing In/Outside Islam: Music and Gendered Cultural Politics in the Middle East and North Africa," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 24 no. 3/4 (July/October 2004), 284.

must understand the in-between spaces in order to fully grasp the social complexities facing gender equality work in Jordan.

The desire to root gender equality movements in the Middle East creates rich discussion about the role of women in religion. According to Pew Research Center, in 2010, 93% of the population in MENA identified as Muslim. In Jordan specifically, 97% of the population identified as Muslim. Due to the widespread practice of Islam in the Middle East, activists and scholars demonstrate the authenticity of gender equality by connecting equality to Islam. Women reclaimed and reinterpreted the stories of the wives of the Prophet by highlighting their participation in early Islamic society and their role in the public domain. Bint al-Shati's work, *The Wives of the Prophets*, points out many key moments where women, specifically the wives of the Prophet Muhammad, played an instrumental role in the formation of Islam. By emphasizing the key role that the wives played in both the political and spiritual aspects of Islamic life, Bint al-Shati demonstrates women's ability to participate in the public sphere. Moroccan activist and scholar Fatima Mernissi encouraged a rereading and reinterpretation of sacred texts. In the introduction to her book, *The Veil and the Male Elite*, she provides her readers with specific steps they can take to study and inform their own opinion of Islamic texts. By calling for a new reading of texts such as the Qur'an, scholars can challenge the classical, male-dominated interpretations of the Qur'an that promoted patriarchal systems.

The call for reinterpretation of sacred Islamic texts leads to different methods of interpretation of the Qur'an that provided a more gender-sensitive reading. According to Aysha Hidayatullah, many female scholars of Islam point to equality as a key principle of

Islam and argue that because equality is a key principle all scripture must be read with equality in mind.²⁰ Activists often point to Islam as a religion that promotes equality between all people and this belief will appear throughout examples in this study. By reinterpreting both the scripture of the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet, women in the Middle East now present arguments for gender equality rooted in the religious tradition of their cultures.

The three ideas of women as symbols of genuine culture, their operation in the in-between spaces of the East/West dichotomy, and the need to prove gender equality as an authentic part of Arab culture shape the way women organizations present themselves and their work to both international and local communities. These concepts will appear throughout this study and provide insight into decision-making processes, communication strategies and the success of implemented programs.

²⁰ Hidayatullah. *Feminist Edges of the Qur'an*, 87.

Chapter 1: Establishing the Women's Rights Movement in Jordan

The discussion of women's activism in Jordan remains largely absent from scholarship on women's movements in the Middle East. When scholars do discuss the history of women's organizations and activism in Jordan, they highlight the strong connection between the Jordanian government and women's organizations. In the 1940s and 1950s, two important women's organizations were founded, the Jordanian Women's Union in 1945 and the Arab Women's Foundation in 1954. These organizations lobbied for greater political representation for women and provided philanthropic services.²¹ However, due to political unrest in 1957, many women's organization in Jordan were forced to dissolve. The website for the Jordanian Women's Union directly references the declaration of martial law as the reason their organization had to disband. However, in the 1970s, women's organizations gained momentum and focused much of their efforts on supporting Palestinian refugees after the exodus from Palestine in 1967. JWU reemerged in 1974.²² The disbanding of JWU and the organization's reemergence in 1974 demonstrates how political events cause governmental attitudes towards women's rights to shift and ultimately influence the operations of women's organizations.

In 1981 the Jordanian government established the General Federation of Jordanian Women. This act firmly established the connection between women's organizations and the Jordanian government. According to Nicola Pratt, "activists suspect that the reason for the closure of the Women's Union was the government's irritation with the Union's independent positions, particularly in international conferences."²³

²¹ Nicola Pratt, "A History of Women's Activism in Jordan: 1946-1989," *7iber.com*, May 26, 2015, <https://www.7iber.com/society/a-history-of-womens-activism-in-jordan-1946-1989/>.

²² "About Us" Jordanian Women's Union, last modified: 2011, <http://jwu.org.jo/Pages/Details.aspx?lng=1&pageid=9>

²³ Pratt, "A History of Women's Activism in Jordan."

Since 1981 the Royal Family in Jordan has played a major role in shaping the discourse surrounding women's rights. The support of the Royal Family has proven beneficial in some cases. For example, the Royal Committee for Developing the Judiciary and Enhancing the Rule of Law recommended the abolishment of Article 308. King Abdullah II supported the recommendation. While the support of figures like King Abdullah II, Queen Rania, and Princess Basma does lend a certain amount of political legitimacy to women's movements in Jordan, the involvement of the royal family also hinders the independence of women's organizations. Scholars of women's movement in the Middle East, including Laurie A. Brand and Nikki Keddie, state that the involvement of the royal family attracted external donors and undermined independent activity.²⁴ As we will see in the next section, the relationship to external donors and the royal family creates both barriers and opportunities for women's organizations in Jordan.

BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Not only must women's organizations navigate the political agenda set forth by the royal family but they must also navigate patriarchal attitudes and conservative ideologies in Jordan. While the gender equality movement has made many gains in Jordan, a report by the United States Agency for International Development states that "the importance of tribal identities and the growing dominance of religious conservative discourse on the appropriate roles of males and females may reduce Jordan's positive gains in gender equality in the last decades."²⁵ The same report features interviews with

²⁴ Keddie, *Women in the Middle East: Past and Present*, 136, and Laurie A. Brand, "Women and the State in Jordan" in *Islam and Development: Religion and Social Change*, ed. Esposito, John (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1982).

²⁵ USAID, *Women's Leadership as a Route to Greater Empowerment* (November 14, 2014), <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/WiP%20-%20Jordan%20Case%20Study.pdf>.

Jordanian activists. The activists state that many Jordanians, both men and women, believe men are better suited to lead in government positions.²⁶ Women have limited economic and political participation. In the past decade, amendments in legal codes have enhanced women's economic rights. Additionally, efforts have been made to increase female representation in Jordan's government by adding female quotas to elections. However, women continue to face restrictions in their participation in the public sphere.

Issues of economics, politics and religion create a complex social discourse that women's organizations must navigate. A study by the Pew Research Center (2012) helps demonstrate the complicated relationship between democracy, religion and gender equality in Jordan. According to the study, Jordanians showed the largest support for a strong economy over a strong democracy than any other country represented. This statistic does not come as an overwhelming surprise due to the struggling state of Jordan's economy. However, the statistics concerning religion and gender equality do provide interesting insight into the relationship between religion and politics in Jordan. Only 31% of Jordanians believe that Islam currently plays a major role in politics. That is the lowest percentage recorded among the countries surveyed. The next lowest percentage is Lebanon with 64% of citizens believing Islam plays a large role in politics. Of the Jordanians that believe Islam has a small role in the government, 80% of them believe this small role to be a negative aspect.²⁷ The previous statistics highlights the importance of economic opportunity and Islam in the social life of Jordanians. Therefore, women's organizations must strategically address both economic and religious issues in order to find success within Jordan.

²⁶ USAID, *Women's Leadership as a Route to Greater Empowerment*, 19.

²⁷ Pew Research Center, *Global Attitudes Project. Most Muslims Want Democracy, Personal Freedoms and Islam in Political Life*, 4.

An encouraging statistic for women's organizations, reported by the same study, indicates that the majority (63%) of Jordanians support the idea of gender equality. However, the support for equal rights wavers as the survey discusses specific methods for achieving gender equality. According to Pew, "When it comes to economics, most say women should be able to work outside the home, but most also believe that when jobs are scarce, jobs for men should be the first priority."²⁸ The previous statistic highlights the importance of economic opportunity in Jordan. This desire for economic opportunity in a struggling economy directly affects how Jordanians think about women's rights.

The Pew study also offers insight into how a respondent's gender correlates with their stated support for gender equality. In the study conducted by Pew, women support gender equality more than men. However, compared to the other countries surveyed in the study, Jordan has the lowest percentage of men that support gender equality. Overall, 63% of Jordanians support the idea of gender equality. The following chart from the Pew Research Center compares the percentage of women who believe women should have equal rights as men to the percentage of men who said women should have equal rights of men. The chart shows the responses of both men and women in six countries with majority Muslim populations.

²⁸ Pew Research Center, *Global Attitudes Project. Most Muslims Want Democracy, Personal Freedoms and Islam in Political Life*, 4.

	<i>% Saying women should have equal rights as men</i>			
	Total	Men	Women	Gap
	%	%	%	
Jordan	63	44	82	-38
Pakistan	76	65	87	-22
Tunisia	74	65	84	-19
Egypt	58	53	63	-10
Lebanon	93	88	98	-10
Turkey	84	83	85	-2

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q85.

Table 1: Gender Gaps on Views About Gender Equality from “Most Muslims Want Democracy, Personal Freedoms and Islam in Political Life” Pew Research Center. Copyright 2012

In Jordan, 44% of men say women should have equal rights compared to the 82% of women who believe women should have equal rights. The -38 gap in opinion between men and women represents the largest gap found in any of the predominately Muslim countries surveyed. The difference in opinion between men and women in Jordan highlights another important area of analysis for women’s organizations. The communication strategies and efforts of women’s organizations have yet to gain majority support from the male population of Jordan. At first glance, the lack of support among men represents a weakness in the gender equality movement in Jordan. However, men may also represent an audience of Jordanian society that women’s organizations have yet to connect with. This unreached segment of the population could represent an opportunity for women’s organizations to create initiatives and messaging that engages and involves men in the gender equality movement.

CONNECTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL FUNDING

The complex political context of women's rights in Jordan does not end with the relationship between politics, gender and society within Jordan, but also has international ramifications. As Keddie and Brand have noted, the involvement of the Jordanian royal family opened up the women's movement to external donor activity. Many of the external donors involved in the human rights movement in Jordan are Western governments and NGOs. Jordanian women's organizations rely on funding from international donors, which restricts their ability to choose which issues to distribute resources to. A 2014 study conducted by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on women's leadership in Jordan supports the theory that reliance on funding from Western organizations hinders the independence of women's organizations in Jordan. The report featured interviews from 45 women activists in Jordan. Many activists confirmed the dependence of women's organizations on foreign donors and government support. The lack of internal funding hinders the independence of these organizations and their ability to use resources in the way they see best fit.

In order to further confirm the heavy involvement of international governments and non-profit organizations, this study compared the donors and partner lists featured on the websites of Sisterhood is Global-Jordan (SIGI) and the Arab Women's Association (AWO). The Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) does not feature a donor or partners page on its Arabic or English language website. The JWU website emphasizes the independence of the organization's work and agenda. However, the JWU website does feature articles on certain programs and initiatives that involve international organizations.

Data from AWO's and SIGI's websites supports the finding that international organizations, specifically organizations based in Europe and the United States, represent

the majority of featured donors and partners. The website of the Arab Women's Association designated the difference between donors and partners, while Sisterhood is Global does not. A review of SIGI's financial report from 2016 shows that almost all partners listed on their website contributed financially to SIGI programs.

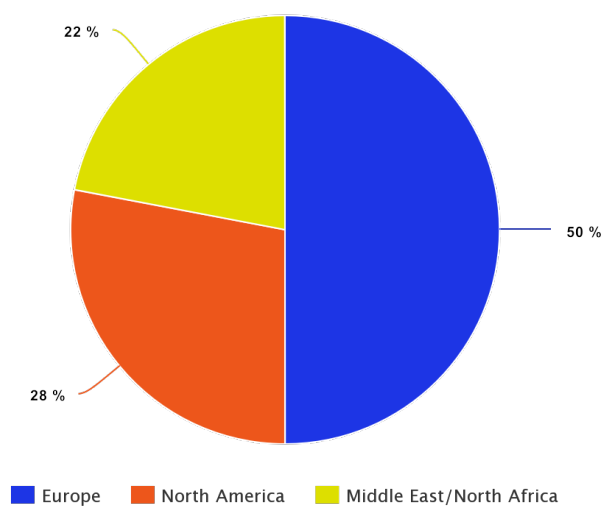


Figure 1: Arab Women's Association Donor/Partner Representation by Region

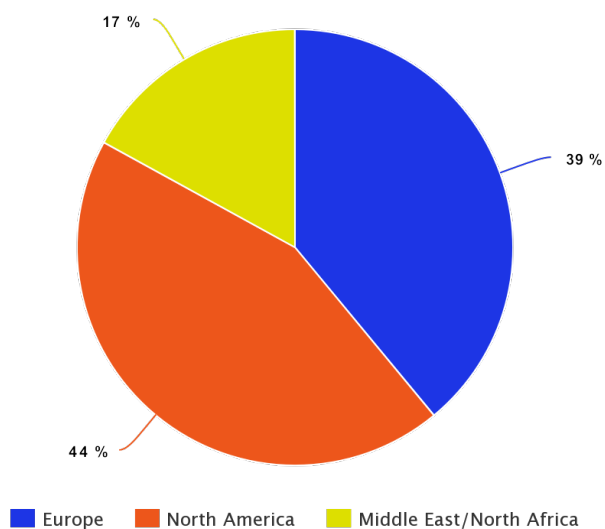


Figure 2: Sisterhood is Global Donor/Partner Representation by Region

Of the 18 partners listed on SIGI's website, the largest percent of those partners (44%) have headquarters in North America. Of the 18 partner's listed on AWO's website, the largest percent of those partners (50%) have headquarters in Europe. When SIGI and AWO's partner lists are combined together, over 80% of their partners have headquarters in either Europe or North America. Both AWO and SIGI feature the Jordanian government as contributors to gender equality programs. This data provides further evidence connecting the gender equality movement to Western-based organizations and the Jordanian government.

The data also reveals that almost 20% of partnerships include organizations based in the Middle East. The Arab Women's Association classifies three of five MENA organizations as donors and two as partners. The existence of local and regional partnerships represents a key component to the success of women's rights activism in Jordan. These partnerships will be explored further in Chapter 3 of this study.

So, now that this study has established that Western organizations play an important role in funding Jordanian women's organizations one may ask how this relationship actually influences the day-to-day operations of these organizations. Two examples highlight the relationship dynamics at play between Western donors and Jordanian WOs. The first example comes from examining the layout of grant and funding application forms received by Jordanian women's organizations from the European Union.

In 2016 and 2017, the European Union put out a call in Jordan for funding proposals for initiatives that promoted of democracy and human rights. The call offered funding to organizations that proposed initiatives that aligned with the objectives laid out by the EU. The application encouraged applicants to tailor their proposals to five main objectives decided by the European Parliament in 2014, which included "support to

human rights and human rights defenders in situations where they are most at risk, support to other priorities of the Union in the field of human rights, support democracy, EU Electoral Observation Missions, and support to targeted key actors and processes, including international and regional human rights instruments and mechanisms.”²⁹ The stated the goal of the application was to create a civil society that “promoted human rights and democratic reform.”³⁰ The term “democratic reform” demonstrates that women’s organizations must propose programs that focus on a specific type of political reform determined by international donors.

The strict guidelines and specific objectives determined by an international organization demonstrate the lack of input that smaller, local organizations have in the agenda setting process. However, many of the objectives proposed by the European Union align with stated objectives of organizations like SIGI, AWO and JWU. In the vision statement of SIGI they state, “the desire to build a democratic society” and the AWO’s vision statement includes an “inclusive democracy.”³¹ The JWU highlights that their leadership is democratically elected.³² This alignment of donor and organizational goals allows women’s organizations to take advantage of these opportunities to propose localized responses.

Despite the rigid structure of the application process, women’s organizations seized the opportunity to provide localized responses to unique problems facing the Jordanian community. The proposal application process for the EU requires that the

²⁹ “Call for Proposals: Democracy and Human Rights” Delegation of the European Union to Jordan, last modified May 16, 2017, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/jordan/26160/call-proposals-democracy-and-human-rights_en.

³⁰ Delegation of the European Union to Jordan, “Call for Proposals.”

³¹ “Our Vision,” Sisterhood is Global, last modified 2018, http://sigi-jordan.org/en/?page_id=710 and “Who We Are,” Arab Women’s Association of Jordan, last modified 2016, <http://awo.org.jo/en/>.

³² “About Us,” Jordan Women’s Union, last modified 2011, <http://jwu.org.jo/Pages/Detiles.aspx?lng=1&pageid=9>.

programs focus either on “the right to fair trial and rule of law” or “freedom of expression and media freedom.” Not only does the call for proposals set the program objectives to be implemented by human rights organizations in Jordan, it further narrows the specific issues that the proposals should address. Similar to the case with the stated objectives, local women’s organizations must be able to adapt current programs and initiatives to fit the proposal guidelines. For example, Sisterhood is Global used the category titled “the right to a fair trial” to propose alternatives to the practice of administrative detention in Jordan. Safe houses for women and girls escaping accusations of honor crimes are a major priority for women’s organizations in Jordan. According to the *Jordan Times* in 2016, only three safe houses existed in Jordan. The Jordanian government operates two safe houses and the Jordanian Women’s Union operated one.³³ Instead of focusing only on achieving a fair trial, SIGI proposed the creation of infrastructure that supports the right to a fair trial, fair rule of law, and provides safety to vulnerable communities in Jordan. SIGI moved past thinking only about the legal process women face in Jordan in order to propose an alternative to legal action.

The European Union grant application process demonstrates the rigid and structured process of working with large international organizations. The application process does not allow for the creation of dialogue between the donor organization and local organizations in Jordan. The international donor sets objectives and even methods early on, and it is up to local organizations to make sure their proposed program meets the stated requirements. However, some international organizations do create intimate dialogue with local partners in Jordan, in order to establish goals and objectives along

³³ Rana Husseini, “New projected shelter to house women under threat of family honour”. *The Jordan Times*, December 03, 2016, <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/new-projected-shelter-house-women-under-threat-over-family-honour>.

with successful and localized programs. One such example is Surgir, a Swiss-based women's rights organization with partnerships in Palestine, Afghanistan, and Jordan.³⁴

While working with Sisterhood is Global Jordan, I assisted with the partnership application between SIGI and Surgir. The goal of the process was to create a program in Jordan that would create independent sustainable income for SIGI. By creating a source of independent and sustainable income, SIGI gains greater autonomy and freedom. Financial autonomy also helps combat accusations that the gender equality movement relies on Western support and ideas.

In my two months working with Sisterhood is Global, I noticed a constant stream of communication between SIGI and Surgir. Members from SIGI and Surgir communicated at least once a week, if not 2-3 times a week, about proposed income-generating programs. Surgir heavily encouraged the creation of a hair salon that would employ at-risk women or women recently released from prison, in order to give themselves economic opportunity. Surgir's enthusiasm for a hair salon derived from experience partnering with other countries in the Middle East and their own research. However, members of SIGI did not share the enthusiasm for the project because they did not believe a hair salon would be a viable business in Amman. SIGI conducted their own research and ended up proposing a restaurant instead. My time with SIGI concluded before a final decision was reached between the two organizations, but the proposal was built around SIGI's restaurant proposal instead of the original hair salon idea.

The relationship between SIGI and Surgir represents one example of a Western organization working closely with a local organization throughout the entire program process. SIGI assisted in the creation of the goals and objectives of their own program,

³⁴ "About Us" Surgir, last modified 2018, <http://www.surgir.ch/en>.

along with the method for obtaining the established objectives. This type of partnership creates an international partnership that benefits from the in-depth knowledge held by local organizations about the communities they serve.

International partnerships and coalitions constitute an important part of the gender equality movement in Jordan. Inclusivity and building partnerships helps smaller regional organizations achieve greater reach. In an interview with Tavaana, an Iranian activist organization, the director of SIGI, Ms. Asma Khader, discussed coalitions and stated:

We are always in need of wider coalitions, we always need to work with others and find the common interest that you share with others and try to focus on these shared priorities that can really gain support from a wider community, regardless of individual support or organizational support. So it's very important to build these coalitions, on a very local level, a national level, and regional and international levels.³⁵

Ms. Khader's statement demonstrates the inclusive approach to women's rights activism in Jordan. She discusses the need for coalition on all levels, including international partnerships. As discussed, the heavy involvement of international organizations leads to local criticism in Jordan and a perceived lack of autonomy. However, local organizations like SIGI and AWO make the needs of their communities heard through international partnerships. International partnerships help provide the funding and media coverage that continue the momentum of the gender equality movement in Jordan.

³⁵ Asma Khader, interview by Tavaana Staff, *Tavaana*, October 28, 2010, https://tavaana.org/sites/default/files/Asma_Khader_En_0.pdf.

MONITORING REPRESENTATION

Despite the influence international organizations play in the gender equality movement in Jordan, women's organizations focus on staying connected and informed about the issues in Jordanian communities. International aid and media organizations such as *Human Rights Watch*, USAID, CNN and the *New York Times* cover women's rights stories in Jordan. International media coverage helps activists vocalize the issues facing their communities on a global stage. Local organizations in Jordan pay close attention to how international media discusses women's issues in Jordan. Women's organizations in Jordan share a tight connection and protect the narrative surrounding the communities they serve.

Activists both acknowledged the struggle of women in Jordan, while combatting negative assumptions about society in the Middle East, including assumptions that religion, culture, or society in the Middle East is inherently backwards, violent, or oppressive. In the case of Article 308, activists, journalists, and government officials in Jordan frequently pointed out in interviews that the law stems from the influence of Western colonialism. Rothna Begum explores the colonial legacy of Article 308 in an article for *Human Rights Watch* (HRW). Begum points out that the origin of what activists termed "marry the rapists" laws actually derived from the French colonial penal code that allowed French men to escape kidnapping prosecution if they married the girl they kidnapped.³⁶ Wafa Bani Mustafa, a member of Lower House of the Jordanian Parliament, told Al-Jazeera, "in essence, it is (Article 308) a European product. The important thing to focus on is that such articles have no religious or societal justification -

³⁶ Rothna Begum, "Middle East on a roll to repeal the marry the rapist laws," *Al-Jazeera*, August 24, 2017, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/08/middle-east-roll-repeal-marry-rapist-laws-170822095605552.html>.

they only discriminate against women.”³⁷ In this statement Mustafa combats the orientalist idea that Arab or Muslim societies are inherently violent or backwards. At the same time, her statement demonstrates to a national Jordanian audience that Article 308 does not have any special rooting in Jordanian society. In an article from CNN, which discusses Article 308 states, “according to the official news agency Article 308 originates from a 1911 Ottoman legal code, largely based on the Napoleonic penal code of 1810.”³⁸ A statement by Jordanian MP Dima Tahboub about the harmony between the article’s repeal and Islamic Sharia precedes the mention of the colonial origin. Together the three examples demonstrate the desire by Jordanians to show that discriminatory laws, like Article 308, do not represent the inherent values of Jordanian society.

Another example of Jordanians, specifically women’s organizations, protecting the depiction of women in Jordan comes from the controversy surrounding the 2003 book *Honor Lost: Love and Death in Modern Day Jordan*. Marketing for the book states that “as tragic as it is true, *Honor Lost* is by turns a heartwarming romance, a eulogy, and a cry for freedom for women across the globe.” The New York Times bestseller describes the honor killing of a 25 year-old Muslim woman named Dalia because of her love for a Christian man. Before reading the book I decided to do some background research on the author, Norma Khouri, and the events described in the book. An internet search of the title revealed that many people, including women’s rights activist in Jordan, do not think that the events described in the book ever happened or that the author, despite her claims, has even lived in Jordan. In fact, the Jordanian National Commission for Women

³⁷ Zena Tahhan, “Meet the woman who pushed to repeal Jordan’s rape law,” *Al-Jazeera*, August 4, 2017, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/08/meet-woman-pushed-repeal-jordan-rape-law-170803111944315.html>.

³⁸ Tamara Qiblawi, “Jordan repeals marry the rapist clause,” *CNN*, August 1, 2017, <https://www.cnn.com/2017/08/01/middleeast/jordan-repeals-rape-marriage-loophole/index.html>.

(JNCW) reached out to the book's publisher to let them know they thought that the story is false. The JNCW stated that "Jordan is a small community and they would have heard of this story."³⁹ The JNCW's notification about their doubts of the stories validity shows the in-depth knowledge activists have about their communities and their unwillingness to let others misrepresent or fabricate stories of Jordanian women. Not only did activists deny the validity of *Honor Lost*, they also denounced the author for her fabrication of the story. Rana Husseini, a Jordanian journalist and human rights activist who has documented the country's "honour" killings for 10 years told The Guardian that, "this woman has ruined our cause."⁴⁰ Director of the JNCW Amal al-Sabbagh responded to the author's defense of *Honor Lost* in the Sydney Morning Herald stating:

She ruined the reputation of Jordanian women, saying they were imprisoned in their homes and so on. Jordanian women have excellent education levels that are gradually being translated into participation in the workforce. Her tone is that all Jordanian women live under these traditional practices, which is wrong.⁴¹

Activists in Jordan understand the struggles of women in their communities. Husseini and al-Sabbagh's statements reveal the frustration felt by activists when people living outside Jordan misrepresent or exploit the struggles of Jordanian women. The strange controversy of *Honor Lost* demonstrates the intimacy and energy with which women's organizations in Jordan know and defend the narratives surrounding Jordanian women on an international level.

The connection between international organizations and the local women's rights movement in Jordan creates both opportunities and struggles for the gender

³⁹ Malcom Knox, "The Lies Stripped Bare," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, July 24, 2004, <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/07/23/1090464851887.html?oneclick=true>).

⁴⁰ David, Fickling, "Bestseller on Honour Killing is a Fake," *The Guardian*, July 26, 2004, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/jul/26/books.booksnews>).

⁴¹ Knox, "The Lies Stripped Bare."

equality movement. The reliance on financial support from Western donors and the Jordanian government creates a lack of autonomy in the agenda-setting process. Women activists must also engage with international and local patriarchal legacies and attempts to discredit gender quality work by claiming it is simply the work of Western influence.

Examples from the European Union and SIGI's partnership with Surgir present the different types of relationship Jordanian women's organizations share with international partners. The call for proposals from the European Union highlight the creative ways local organizations match local goals and objectives to goals and methods prescribed by large Western NGOs. The SIGI and Surgir partnership gives insight into those programs created by close dialogue between international and local partners. The program proposed by SIGI and Surgir hoped to achieve greater financial independence for SIGI. The close partner relationship allows local organizations to work together with larger international organizations to define goals that lead to greater autonomy.

Finally, the influence of Western organizations on women's rights in Jordan does not stop with financial support. Article 308 represents the legacy of Western colonialism in the Middle East and how women must struggle against current patriarchal ideologies and historical ones. Women's organizations and Jordanians as a whole must also monitor the international narrative surrounding of women's issues in Jordan. Activists vocally opposed the false story of an honor killing circulated in the book *Honor Lost*. Not only do women's organizations monitor the international narrative, they use their voices to correct misconceptions of Jordanian women in international media. Women's organizations in Jordan do not simply accept instructions or goals from Western organizations or the Jordanian government. These organizations care about the communities they serve and pay attention to the needs of the women in Jordan.

Chapter 2: Key Issues and Objectives

Women's organizations in Jordan look to their communities to decide how to choose their goals and use their resources. Before assessing the ability of women's organizations to create change in Jordan, it is necessary to understand exactly what change they hope to create. Analysis of AWO's, JWU's, and SIGI's websites, financial records, and resources reveals three shared goals. These goals include ending gender-based violence, changing laws that contribute to discrimination against women, and creating educational, political and economic opportunities for women.

This chapter will begin with a discussion of how the publications of women's organizations in Jordan reflect the three goals identified above. After establishing the important issues reflected in women's organizations' publications, a look at the financial budget for SIGI will provide a glimpse at how financial resources are allocated to services and programs. The section on budgets and provided services will also discuss the major services AWO and JWU provide for women in Jordan. The chapter will conclude with a look at how major coalitions in Jordan reflect the top priority issues for women's organizations in the country.

PUBLICATIONS AND ELECTRONIC LEARNING RESOURCES

All three organizations' websites share similar themes of empowering and equipping women to become active participants in Jordanian civil society. Women's empowerment includes initiatives to encourage political and economic participation. They also share an emphasis on creating a more equal and democratic society. All organizations also highlight the importance of working toward ending gender-based violence. Additionally, the organizations focus on legal reform, aimed at changing laws

that discriminate against Jordanian or non-Jordanian women. For example, SIGI focuses on the rights of Syrian refugees and JWU specifically names the rights of Palestinian women in their visions and goals. AWO places greater emphasis on peace-building and de-radicalization initiatives.

AWO, SIGI, and JWU publish articles, pamphlets, manuals, or books on gender issues in Jordan. A survey of these published materials reveals the top issues that women's organizations in Jordan aim to address. The website of Sisterhood is Global offers a data-driven look into the frequency with which certain issues appear in organizational news and research. SIGI's Arabic language site offers a breakdown of categories the user can use while searching the website's publications. The search bar is categorized both by type of publication (i.e. report, news, study) or by topic of publication (i.e. health, law, politics). The site contains over 450 articles. The top five categories sorted by topic are listed in the table below.

Topic	Number of Articles	Percentage of Total Articles
Violence against Women	88	19.6%
Women in Politics	74	16.4%
Economic Opportunity	70	15.6%
Children and Childbirth	19	4.2%
Law and Women's Rights	14	3.1%

Table 2: Top 5 Issues found in SIGI Website Publications

When the articles are classified by the type of issue on SIGI's website, violence against women has the highest amount of representation. SIGI's publications also reveal an emphasis on equipping women with the resources to become both politically and economically active citizens in Jordan. The website of AWO demonstrates a similar

focus on the issues of gender-based violence, civil empowerment, and legal reform.⁴² Five of the eight publications from AWO's website address gender-based violence, two are civic education training manuals, and one discusses citizenship laws in Jordan. Once again the publications of AWO reflects the shared priority of ending gender-based violence. The electronic library of JWU includes a declaration to end violence against women and an article on election laws in Jordan. The publications of all three websites reflect the shared commitment of women's rights organizations in Jordan to end gender-based violence, encourage civic participation, and reform the legal system.

BUDGETS AND PROVIDED SERVICES

Women's rights organizations in Jordan speak frequently about ending gender-based violence, creating political and economic opportunity, and obtaining legal rights for women. So, how do women's organizations in Jordan devote financial resources to each of their objectives? A look into the 2016 Financial Statement of Sisterhood is Global provides insight into how SIGI commits monetary resources to different programs. The financial statement also includes categories like salaries and office supplies and maintenance.⁴³ The following table shows that breakdown of financial resources among programs and services excluding administrative budget categories.

⁴² Website for the Jordanian Women's Union <http://jwu.org.jo/Home.aspx?lng=1>
Website for the Arab Women's Organization <https://www.awo.org.jo/>

⁴³ Sisterhood is Global, التقرير المالي 2016 *Financial Report* (2016), 16.

	Total in Dinar	Percent of Budget
Total Starting Amount of Budget for Programs and Services	87,262	
Eyes on Women in the 2016 Election	56,226	64.43%
Training Conferences	19,210	22.01%
Workshops	7,140	8.18%
Psychological Support Sessions	2,570	2.95%
Treatments and Medicines	2,116	2.42%

Table 3: 2016 Sisterhood is Global Budget by Programs and Services

Almost 65% of SIGI’s budget went to the 2016 Eyes on Women campaign. The campaign partnered with other local human right’s organizations to monitor the 2016 elections to ensure a fair electoral process for women. The large amount of financial resources spent on ensuring fair elections demonstrates the importance of encouraging female participation in the political sphere both as engaged voters and candidates for office. In 2016 the number of female Parliament members increased from 18 seats in 2015 to 20 seats in the 2016 election.⁴⁴ 30% of the budget for SIGI in 2016 went to training conferences and workshops. These workshops covered training seminars on legal rights, economic opportunities, and cultural learning. Finally, 5% of SIGI’s budget helped provide both physical and mental health services to women in Jordan.

The activities of the Arab Women’s Association of Jordan encourage civil engagement by women in Jordan. The workshops of AWO feature training women on economic empowerment, women’s leadership in climate change, and helping women promote their own political campaigns.⁴⁵ AWO, JWU, and SIGI put on workshops to train members of the Jordanian community, especially women, on how to engage with important social and political issues in their community. The Jordanian Women’s Union has the most robust lineup of health and safety service for women. They offer a hotline

⁴⁴ Cuthburt, “Women gain ground in Jordan election spite yawning gender gap.”

⁴⁵ Arab Women’s Association “Activities” last modified: 2017 <http://awo.org.jo/en/activities/page/2/>

and safe house for victims of abuse. The JWU also provides a “Child Guest House” program that offers a space for divorced or separated parents to interact with their children in a safe environment and solve interpersonal conflict.⁴⁶ They also offer clinical and medical services to women in the community. The focus on civil empowerment workshops again highlights the goal of women’s organizations empower women through education and civil engagement. The large financial resources applied to campaigns like “Eyes on Women in the Election” (عين على النساء في انتخابات) demonstrate the desire to ensure an environment that provides women with equal political opportunity. The priority of safe houses reflects the goal of ending gender-based violence in Jordan, by giving women safe spaces and the health care they need when escaping violence within the home. The safe houses, hotlines and workshops prove the commitment of women’s organizations to providing support for victims and ultimately ending gender-based violence.

COALITIONS

The work of AWO, JWU and SIGI all share overlapping goals and initiatives. This is because these organizations often collaborate to create change. Objectives like creating more political and economic opportunity are not limited by organization. Once women’s organizations determine their top priority issues, they join international, regional and local coalitions to achieve their objectives. In order to successfully accomplish organizational goals such as increasing awareness and enhancing political and economic empowerment, women’s organizations in Jordan frequently partner with other organizations in their community. In an interview with *Tavanna*, SIGI president

⁴⁶ “Regional Programs” Jordanian Women’s Union, last modified 2011, <http://jwu.org.jo/Pages/Detiles.aspx?lng=1&pageid=15>.

Asma Khader, said, “A person by himself or herself will never be able to change a whole situation.”⁴⁷ It is through these partnerships that women’s organizations achieve their goals of ending gender-based violence, civic engagement and legal reform. Partnerships between international and local women’s and human rights organizations are extremely common in Jordan. In fact, many of the campaigns discussed in this study include partnerships between local organizations. The partnerships reflect the shared goals of women’s organizations in Jordan including political empowerment, economic empowerment, and ending gender based violence.

For example, the campaign “Eyes on Women in the Election” focused on monitoring the 2016 parliament elections to make ensure the fair treatment of female candidates and voters. Sisterhood is Global, who spearheaded the effort, would not have succeeded in monitoring the entire Jordanian electoral process alone. Success was achieved because all three Jordanian women’s organizations listed the political empowerment of women as a key objective. The “Eyes on Women” campaign also included international and local partners. The campaign materials included the logos of Hivos, Motive Foundation, and SIGI. An example of an online campaign banner shows the placement of organizational logos throughout the Eyes on Women campaign materials.

⁴⁷ Khader, interview.



Illustration 1: Eyes on Women Online Campaign Banner

The prominent place of both Hivos and Motive logos show that SIGI does not mind highlighting the campaign's connection to larger international organizations. However, the coalition also boasts over 40 local member organizations. This also aligns with Khader's earlier statement that coalitions must be built on local, national, and international levels.⁴⁸ Photos from the "Eyes on Women in the Election" Facebook page show many local volunteers training to participate in election monitoring.⁴⁹ "Eyes on Women in the Election" is just one example of coalitions in Jordan working together to obtain the objective of political empowerment for women. The women's organizations identified the objective of political empowerment, utilized international funding and resources to create the campaign, and executed the campaign by forming a local coalition in Jordan.

Coalition-building between women's organization in Jordan does not stop with political empowerment. The high priority of economic empowerment led to the creation

⁴⁸ Khader, interview.

⁴⁹ Eyes on Women in the Election, "Eyes on Women in the Election campaign banner," Facebook, August 18, 2017, https://www.facebook.com/pg/Eyeonwomen/posts/?ref=page_internal.

of another coalition. In February 2018, both the Arab Women's Association and Sisterhood is Global joined a new organization titled "Coalition Rights."⁵⁰ In only a few months, the coalition had nine members, organized a march for women's labor rights on International Labor Day, and proposed recommendations for more gender sensitive labor laws in Jordan.⁵¹ The partnerships between women's organizations in Jordan reflect the importance of achieving objectives like political and economic empowerment. The coalition highlights the importance of economic empowerment and legal reform for women's organizations in Jordan. Coalition-building occurs when women's organizations decide that their top priority issues like ending gender-based violence, or legal reform will only be achieved by working together.

This chapter presented the three main objectives of women's rights organizations in Jordan. Women's organizations aim to achieve gender equality through political and economic empowerment, they want to reform legal systems and women's organizations hope to end gender-based violence. The organizations offer publications that help women safely express their experiences of overcoming gender-based violence, or educate them on civic engagement. They also allocated a large amount of their resources to provide safe homes, hotlines, and legal and medical care to victims of gender based violence, set up work shops for civil engagement, and educate women about legal reform processes. Finally, women's organizations build coalitions to accomplish some of their most important objectives, because they believe in the power of these partnerships.

⁵⁰ Ana Prieto, "Recommendation for more gender sensitive labour law under study," *The Jordan Times*, February 17, 2018, <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/recommendations-more-gender-sensitive-labour-law-under-study>.

⁵¹ Rana Hussein, "Coalition launched to lobby MPs, gov't on women's rights in Labour Law," *The Jordan Times*, April 5, 2018, <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/coalition-launched-lobby-mps-gov%E2%80%99t-women%E2%80%99s-rights-labour-law>.

Chapter 3: Communicating Ideals

The first two chapters established that the relationship between international organizations and local women's organization creates both opportunities and barriers for the gender equality movement in Jordan. To complicate the work of gender equality in Jordan, women's organization must speak to both the international Western audience and local audiences in Jordan. This chapter will examine exactly how women's organizations craft messaging that connects with wide-ranging international and local audiences. Due to the heavy focus on the relationship with international organizations in the first chapter most of the analysis in this chapter will focus on the relationship between women's organizations and local communities.

To understand these groups' communication strategies, we will ask three questions. What type of rhetoric do women's organizations employ in their messaging? Where do women's organizations place their messaging? Who speaks on behalf of women in Jordan? This analysis includes both English and Arabic sources from news outlets in Jordan, official organization websites, and the social media platforms of SIGI, AWO, and JWU.

RHETORICAL STRATEGIES

Local media coverage plays an important role in shaping how local communities understand and think about the women's rights movement in Jordan. The local media in Jordan covered the repeal very closely and an analysis of how news sources presented the stories provides insight into recurring themes in the debate surrounding gender equality in Jordan. In the history of women's rights in the Middle East, activists discuss the rights of women in the context of creating strong families and nations. Those who both defend and

oppose certain rights for women use the vocabulary of “the family” to frame their arguments. The press coverage in Jordan surrounding Article 308 revealed the importance of family values in the discussion of women’s rights.

An article in the *Jordan Times* covering the repeal of Article 308 revealed that both the opposition and proponents of the repeal used the term “family values” to articulate their arguments. Prime Minister Hani Mulki, who supported an entire repeal of the Article as opposed to only amending the Article, stated that “the government is committed to abolishing Article 308 in order to protect Jordanian family values.”⁵² The opposition proposed creating amendments to the article instead of a full repeal. The amendment would include exceptions “in incidents of consensual sex and sexual molestation of victims aged between 15 and 18, or anyone who seduces a virgin over 18 years of age with the promise of marriage and caused her to lose her virginity.”⁵³ The proposal to amend the article instead of repeal the article received support in the Lower House of the Jordanian parliament. Supporters of the bill, including President of the Legal Committee at the lower House of Parliament, Mustafa Khasawneh, argued that, “today we are legally, socially, morally, tribally, and nationally obligated to accept the amendments because this is in favor of women and the family.”⁵⁴ In the minds of both the opponents and proponents of repealing Article 308, to support women is to support the family.

National pride also plays an important role in the discussion of Article 308. In the first quote by MP Mulki, he does not just say family values, but instead “Jordanian

⁵² Rana Hussein, “In a historic vote, House abolishes controversial Article 308,” *The Jordan Times*, August 1, 2017, <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/historic-vote-house-abolishes-controversial-article-308>

⁵³ Hussein, “In a historic vote, House abolishes controversial Article 308.”

⁵⁴ Hussein, “In a historic vote, House abolishes controversial Article 308.”

family values.” Mr. Khasawneh, who supported amending instead of repealing, argued that Jordanians “are nationally obligated to accept the amendments.” The combining of nationalism and family values aligns with the ideologies of important nationalist figures in the Middle East, like Qasim Amin in Egypt. As discussed in the introduction, nationalist who supported women’s rights argued that women with more access to things like education helped create stronger families, which contributed to a more successful nation. The statements of MP Mulki and Mr. Khasawneh demonstrate a similar logic connecting the protection of women and therefore the family as a source of national pride.

Male members of parliament use the themes of national pride and family values in their discussion of women’s rights, but do women’s organizations use similar language? The answer, is yes. However, the appeal to national pride and family values is subtle and not explicitly stated. In a promotional video created by SIGI to encourage Jordanians to support the repeal of 308, statistics flash across the screen detailing opinions Jordanians hold about sexual assault and the relationship between criminals and victims.⁵⁵ One statistic states that 92% of Jordanians would encourage victims to file a complaint against the criminal. Another states that 54% of Jordanians say they would never encourage a victim to marry the criminal. The video features six statistics and all begin with “من الاردنيين” meaning “of Jordanians”. The choice to include data polled only from Jordanians creates a sense of solidarity and unity amongst Jordanians about the need to protect victims of sexual assault in their communities.

The video continues to emphasize national solidarity by ending the video with about 15 people, both men and women, stating their support for the repeal of Article 308.

⁵⁵ Sisterhood is Global Jordan, “الجزء الثاني- وثائقي ٣٠٨” YouTube video, 10:13, December 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSI_nP6V6LE&t=455s.

All of the statistics, experts, and supporters speak in Arabic, many speaking in the Jordanian dialect, further connecting the video and its message to the Jordanian community. The use of Arabic, data specific to Jordanians, and statements of support from a variety of Jordanian citizens, demonstrates the desire to prove national solidarity for women's rights in Jordan.

The language of national solidarity appears in campaign materials but does the language of family values? Again, the answer is yes, but not so explicitly. In the same video a medical expert discusses the negative consequences of a marriage relationship that begins with sexual assault. Dr. Amal Tahtamouni explains how a marriage beginning with an event like sexual assault often leads to continued violence in the relationship. She warns that the cycle of violence can continue to children and even reach outside of the home. This logic highlights that violence in the family can have greater consequences on the larger community.

In a jarring combination of visual and sound a 14- year- old girl discusses the loss of childhood and existence after marriage. The voice of the girl plays over images of a house burning and young girl in a wedding dress standing off to the side while other children play together. The scene ends with the statistic that 54% of Jordanians say they would never encourage a victim to marry the culprit. The expertise of Dr. Tahtamouni and the imagery in the campaign video warn against the consequences of violence against women. The burning house and forlorn child imply that violence against women is an extremely destructive force to the health of the family.



Illustration 2: Burning Home after Child Marriage from SIGI Article 308 Campaign Video



Illustration 3: Final Scene of Young Girl Discussing Child Marriage and Statistics from SIGI Article 308 Campaign Video

An article by the *Jordan Times* focuses on the efforts of the JNCW. It quotes an argument from the JNCW stating that the Penal Code “only links women to reputation, honour and chastity, [thereby clearly discriminating] against women and their status in

society”.⁵⁶ This displays an effort to deal directly with ideological issues and common social depictions of women and their role in society. Members of parliament explicitly use terms like national duty and Jordanian family values. In contrast, the messaging of women’s organizations flips the argument of keeping Article 308 in place on its head. Women’s organizations argue by using the same ideas of national pride, the classification of women in society, and the health of the family to show how Article 308 causes major problems for the development of families and communities.

The Pew Study (2012) on ideologies of politics, religion, and economy in Jordan revealed that 63% of Jordanians believe Islam has a small role in the government.⁵⁷ Of that 63% of Jordanians, 80% believe it is a negative for the government that Islam only plays a small role in politics.⁵⁸ The statistic demonstrates that religion could play an important role in connecting the discourse of women’s rights to a large portion of the Jordanian population and offer women’s organizations a new strategy for connecting gender equality to the religious fabric of Jordanian society.

A 2009 publication by The Arab Women’s Association of Jordan gives insight into how religion has been used to justify gender based violence and how it can be used to argue against violence towards women. *Breaking the Circles of Silence* introduces what violence against women looks like, some why gender-based violence persists, and how to prevent it in the future. The article specifically points to the example of the Prophet’s life in order to demonstrate respect towards women and states “that Islam gives

⁵⁶ “Women, children still not equal under the law, women’s groups says,” *The Jordan Times*, January 24, 2017, <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/women-children-still-not-equal-under-law-women%E2%80%99s-group-says>.

⁵⁷ Pew Research Center, 2012 *Global Attitudes Project. Most Muslims Want Democracy, Personal Freedoms and Islam in Political Life*, 4.

⁵⁸ Pew Research Center, 2012 *Global Attitudes Project. Most Muslims Want Democracy, Personal Freedoms and Islam in Political Life*, 4.

respect to women and that the Prophet's life demonstrated this respect.” The article also explains that “all religion give rights to women.”⁵⁹ AWO also denounces “religious fanaticism” and the “extreme Islamist trend.”⁶⁰ The AWO attempts to change the idea promoted by extremist groups and orientalist stereotypes, that violence of any kind towards women is religiously justified in Islam.

The campaign video by SIGI uses a variety of experts to discuss the need to repeal Article 308. The video features Dr. Hamdi Murad, a professor at The World Islamic Sciences and Education University in Jordan, who discusses the law and its relationship to Islam. Dr. Murad argues that Islamic teachings value justice and allowing sexual offenders to go free does not allow justice for victims or the victims' communities. This appeals not only to the theme of respect and equality for all people in Islam, which is often highlighted by women's rights activists but also appeals to the idea of justice. The theme of justice could help reach a conservative audience that may be more skeptical of messaging from an activist organization. Women's organization and activists use the rhetoric of a nation united for women's rights and goals rooted in the religious culture of Jordan.

Historically, the ideals of family values, national pride, or the proper place of women in society have been used to limit the movement and rights of women in the private and public spheres. However, women's organizations in Jordan do not shy away from the concepts to family values, national pride, or that status of women in society or religion. Instead they harness these concepts for their own use and demonstrate how women's rights can empower the nation and create stronger families and communities.

⁵⁹ Arab Women's Association of Jordan, *Breaking The Circles of Silence: Violence Against Women* (2009), 18, <http://awo.org.jo/en/2009/01/07/breaking-the-circles-of-silence/>.

⁶⁰ Arab Women's Association, *Breaking The Circles of Silence: Violence Against Women*, 18.

Some women's organization even use the actions or words of religious figures to highlight the value of gender equality in society. Women's organizations in Jordan use their deep knowledge of Jordanian society to craft messaging that resonates with important social norms, while still encouraging change.

MEDIA PLACEMENT

Now that we have established what women's organization say, we will move to a discussion of where women's organizations place their messaging. Women's organizations use a combination of traditional media sources including newspaper, radio, and television alongside a heavy social media presence to communicate their messaging.

Traditional media provides women's organizations with an established platform to communicate their message to local audiences. SIGI releases daily press releases and reports that mimic the type of reporting conducted in newspapers. The reports are primarily published in Arabic, but important reports on highlighted issues like the repeal of Article 308, administrative detention and child marriage have English translations. When I volunteered with SIGI, I helped translate some of their numerous reports. I heard throughout my time the desire to commit more resources to translating their research. The choice of a formalized report style or press release gives the women's organizations a sense of traditional academic and journalistic training, which allows them to speak with authority on the status women in Jordan.

Women's organization tend to use Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) in their reports and press releases. The language mimics the language seen in traditional Arabic newspapers. The use of MSA communicates a higher level of formality and education. The use of MSA in official communication by women's organizations gives the research

a more formalized and authoritative tone. The use of traditional media establishes women's organizations ability to speak confidently on women's issues that influence politics, law and economics.

Traditional media establishes the voices of women's organizations in their local community, and social media provides them with the ability to interconnect the messaging of their programs and initiatives and create online communities locally and internationally. The count of social media followers varies depending on organization. Each organization actively utilizes Facebook to send out posts of their latest research, upcoming events or share posts from other activist groups.

	Facebook Followers	Twitter Followers
AWO	7,048	2014
JWO	1,219	N/A
SIGI	26,727	291

Table 4: Count of Social Media followers of Women's Organizations in Jordan (2017)

All three Facebook pages of AWO, JWU, and SIGI use the social media platform to highlights trainings they have conducted or panels members of their organization participated. The posts show active engagement in the community and invitations to join them at upcoming events put on by each organization. Posts usually receive at least one comment demonstrating the community's engagement with the organizations through social media. Most posts use Arabic and followers respond in Arabic, further grounding the social media pages connecting the pages to local communities.



Illustration 4: Invitational Post from Sisterhood is Global

The invitational post from Sisterhood is Global (Illustration 4) highlights the use of Arabic, the use of social media to invite Jordanians to their event, and the interaction with followers through likes and comments. The pages help women's organizations connect to local communities and feature the work and programs they offer to help women across Jordan.

The use of social media does not end with building a strong connection with local communities. Some campaigns involve connecting with international women's rights campaigns, as well. For example, in 2017 SIGI produced video shorts of why their members, including SIGI founder Ms. Asma Khader, supported the 2017 Women's

March in Washington D.C..⁶¹ The members spoke completely in Arabic including those who are fluent in English. This decision demonstrates a desire to both show solidarity on an international level and connect with a local audience.

On International Women's Day in 2018, AWO tweeted pictures of their members gathered to celebrate women. The event featured flowers and customized photo background for attendees to use to take pictures of the event and share on social media.



Illustration 5: Celebration Post by Arab Women's Association of Jordan on International Women's Day 2018.

The design of the photo frame is based on the design of the social media platform Instagram. Businesses and non-profits alike commonly use this type of photo frame in social media campaigns around the world. The choice of the photo frame shows an

⁶¹ Sisterhood is Global Jordan, “#whyImarch,” Facebook, January 21, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/Sigi.Jor/videos/1307180066010934/>

awareness of international social media trends. In addition, the celebration of international women's day and the use of the "#IWD2018" connects the AWO to the larger international women's movement.

The use of media style reporting, using social media to promote local events, and engaging in international campaigns demonstrates the sophisticated and inclusive media placement strategy of women's organizations in Jordan. The choice to utilize traditional media formatting and language gives women's organizations a sense of authority to speak on important issues facing their communities. The use of social networking creates both local and global awareness for events and increases women's organizations' international visibility.

THE VOICES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN JORDAN

We now turn to the people and voices that women's organizations use to communicate their messaging and represent themselves and Jordanian women to local and international communities. A key goal of WOs is to empower women through political and economic participation in different Jordanian communities. Therefore, women's organizations offer a platform for Jordanian women themselves to voice their own personal experiences.

The 2009 publication *Breaking the Circle of Silence* and the 2013 publication *Rising Up and Moving On: Women Voices in Jordan* give women in Jordan the chance to articulate their own experiences. The introduction of *Rising Up* states the goal of "taking women's empowerment a step further to enable the battered women to experience healing

through the writing of their own stories.”⁶² In the publication, women tell their stories of overcoming sexual harassment in the work place, completing higher education, and overcoming domestic violence.

In a story about the struggles of being a widow in Jordan, a woman referred to as Ms. S describes the difficult circumstances she endured after the death of her husband. After outlining the poor treatment by her in-laws and difficult financial situation, she talks about her experience with a women’s organization that helped her overcome her struggles. She concludes her story by encouraging other women and says:

I advise every widowed, divorced or married woman not to surrender to circumstances and erroneous traditions towards women and I encourage her not to remain silent in relation to any violence that she might be subjected to through confronting such violence or through seeking assistance from family or specialists.⁶³

In this quote Ms. S both encourages women to leave violent situations and gives them a starting place to seeking help. The publication gives a platform for women to tell their stories and to encourage other women to seek help using the resources provided by local women’s organization in their community. Allowing local women to speak on behalf of women’s organizations and their own circumstances shows the strong connection women’s organizations share with the communities they serve. It creates a testimonial about the services provided by women’s organization and proves the authenticity of the women’s movement in Jordan.

The Article 308 campaign video by SIGI discussed in the previous chapter also uses local voices to speak on behalf of the Jordanian women and explain the experiences

⁶² Arab Women’s Association of Jordan, *Rising Up and Moving On: Women Voices in Jordan* (2013), <http://www.awo.org.jo/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Rising-up-Moving-on.pdf>.

⁶³ Arab Women’s Association of Jordan, *Rising Up and Moving On: Women Voices in Jordan*, 6.

they face. The video begins with female voices sharing stories of how the law negatively influences lives. The use of the local Arabic dialect to articulate these stories demonstrates to Jordanians that the negative consequences of the law effect the women in their communities. The video encourages Jordanian's to image their own mother, sister, wife, or daughter dealing with the difficult consequences of a law like Article 308.

The use of personal stories and local voices root women's issues and the gender equality movement in Jordanian society. The use of authoritative voices such as medical professionals, religious scholars, political figures and heads of women's organizations provide the messaging with the expertise needed to further legitimize the call for gender equality. In the discussion of religious rhetoric, the campaign video features a scholar of Islam and a medical expert. The video also included statements by a psychologist and lawyer on the need to repeal Article 308. The use of professionals from a range of fields assures that a wide variety of people hear the message of women's rights from an expert in a field they respect.

The directors and presidents of women's organizations in Jordan frequently act as spokespeople for not only for their organizations but also for Jordanian women as a whole. A simple google search for Asma Khader, director of Sisterhood is Global, reveals interviews with international organizations like *NPR*, *HRW* and with local interviews with the *Jordan Times*. Layla Naffa, director of programs at AWO, provides statements on behalf of women in publications like *The Guardian* and Jordanian newspaper *Ad-Dustour*. The leaders of women's rights organizations provide both international and local media with information about the status of women in Jordan.

The leaders of women's organization do not limit themselves to speaking on women's issues. In an article in *Ad-Dustour* (2016) discussing the decentralization process in Jordan, Layla Naffa is quoted supporting decentralization. Naffa states,

“decentralization is part of the process of political reform because it seeks to increase popular participation and democracy through the electoral funds.”⁶⁴ The role of leaders like Layla Naffa and Asma Khader as spokespeople for women in Jordan allow their influence to extend to more than just issues of women’s rights, and to speak on behalf of all Jordanians.

Answering the question of what kind of rhetoric women’s organizations use revealed the subtle use of themes like family values and national pride that remain important to Jordanian society. Female activists hope to move past placing women’s value in what women contribute to the home or the nation. So, activists in Jordan use images and stories to connect with themes like family values but do not use the explicit language of “family values” to articulate their position on women’s rights.

The stories of local Jordanian women, the expertise of professionals, and leaders of women’s organizations articulate the message of gender equality to both local and international communities. The voices of local women ground women’s activism in the real issues facing Jordanian society. Experts in fields of medicine, health, law, and religion offer legitimacy to the arguments for women’s rights. Lastly, the notoriety of leaders of women’s organization allow them to speak on behalf of Jordanian women on issues of politics, economics, and society.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

But are these communication strategies effective? A look at social media and local newspaper engagement reveals that yes, these communication strategies do in fact influence public discourse in Jordan. If women’s organizations successfully communicate

⁶⁴Al-Abadi, “قانون اللامركزية إصلاحي بامتياز,” *Ad-Dustour*, December 21, 2016.

their top priority issues to the Jordanian community, local media coverage should reflect a similar priority of issues. In order to determine the success of the strategies and programs of women's organizations, this survey studied the frequency with which Jordan's number one circulated newspaper, *Al-Rai*, covers specific women's rights issues. *Al-Rai* has the highest print circulation of about 50,000 and remains one of the top 10 visited news websites in Jordan.⁶⁵

Topic	Number of Articles
Violence against Women "العنف ضد المرأة"	568
Political Representation "المرأة في السياسة"	276
Economic Opportunity Women "الفرص الاقتصادية للمرأة"	204
Law and Women's Rights "قانون حقوق النساء"	200

Table 5: Number of Articles on Women's Issues from *Al-Rai's* Arabic Language Website

My survey shows that the appearance of issues like violence against women, economic opportunity and political participation on *Al-Rai's* website reflect the order on SIGI's website. In both *Al-Rai's* coverage of women's issues, and SIGI's publications, violence against women remains the number one topic. Political representation and economic opportunity for women also persist as important issues on *Al-Rai's* website and like SIGI's website have a similar amount of coverage. Chapter 2 established the three key initiatives of women's rights organizations, political engagement, economic opportunity, and violence against women. *Al-Rai's* coverage of women's rights reflects the same level of importance given to these three initiatives. The coverage of women's organization's top priority issues by the most circulated newspaper in Jordan

⁶⁵ Rana F. Sweis and Dina Baslan, "Mapping Digital Media: Jordan," *Open Society Foundations*, October 10, 2013, <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/mapping-digital-media-jordan-20131121.pdf>.

demonstrates the success of women's organizations in raising awareness about gender issues in Jordan.

In fact, news outlets in Jordan often use reports and research from women's organizations in their own articles. An article in local newspaper *Ad-Dustour* focuses on an economic study conducted by Sisterhood is Global. This article discusses the economic opportunity of women in Jordan and focuses on the lack of opportunity for women to obtain new positions in the job market.⁶⁶ The article not only references job opportunities but how marital status and socioeconomic status influence economic opportunities for women. This example demonstrates not only a shared concern for economic opportunity for women, but cites SIGI as an authoritative source of information on the topic.

"The Eyes on Women in the Election" campaign also shows how local news outlets use resources created by women's organizations. SIGI's website boasts that the campaign also includes an alliance with 36 community organizations from across Jordan.⁶⁷ The promotional materials for the campaign feature both the need for more women in government positions while also showing the successes of the campaign throughout the election process. SIGI created easily sharable social media posts. These posts include images and short quotes to help spread awareness during the campaign. One post shows a woman voting with the statement that as the attention for women's issues in government increases as the number of female candidates increases. The following image shows the layout of the post.

⁶⁶ H. Al-Haj, "٢٢٪ من فرص العمل المستحدثة للنساء," *Ad Dustour*, August 29, 2017, <http://www.addustour.com/articles/972587>.

⁶⁷ "(عين على النساء) يؤكد ضرورة المشاركة السياسية المؤثرة للنساء بالانتخابات," Sisterhood is Global, last modified: 2016, <http://sigi-jordan.org/ar/?p=1733>.



Illustration 6: Social media post from Eyes on Women campaign detailing the rise in attention to women's issues as the number of female candidates' increases.

The creation of posts specifically for social media allows other media sources to share the success of the campaign. *Al-Wakaai* used one of the campaign's posts to discuss the increase in female voter turnout during the 2016 election.⁶⁸ The strategically crafted posts allow coalition members and news sources to emphasize either the need for greater political participation by women or highlight the success of women in the election. In both cases, the campaign receives free press that creates awareness and visibility. The following image provides an example of a post featuring the success of the "Eyes on Women" campaign.

⁶⁸ Al-Wakkai, "عين على النساء: إقبال كبير من النساء على بعض مراكز الإقتراع," *Al Wakaai.com*, September 09, 2016, <http://www.alwakaai.com/post.php?id=204585>.



Illustration 7: Eyes on Women Social Post featured in article on *Al-Waaki.com*

Jordanian women's organizations address important issues on gender equality with strategy and creativity. The subtle appeal to social values and national identity demonstrates a keen awareness of how to communicate with the local Jordanian audience. Instead of framing themselves as completely opposed to certain cultural topics such as the health of the family, women's organization's use these conversations to demonstrate how gender equality can improve families and communities. This reworking of traditional values highlights the inclusive and creative nature of women's organizations in Jordan. Secondly, heavy social media usage highlights the willingness of women's organizations to innovate and connect with both international and local audiences. These organizations' again value inclusivity and networking, when working towards gender equality. Lastly, the shared campaign publications and materials amongst

women's organizations and local news outlets affirms that women's organizations know how to successfully share information about their initiatives. Women's organizations choose their top priority issues and use strategically crafted messages and innovative media placement to effectively raise awareness and garner support for women's rights in Jordan.

Chapter 4: Article 308

The campaign to repeal Article 308 represents an extremely successful initiative for women's rights groups in Jordan. To fully appreciate the effectiveness of the coalition to repeal Article 308, this case study will introduce the history of Article 308 and then analyze the campaign that led to the Article's repeal. The case study of Article 308 demonstrates how women's organizations recognize barriers and opportunities, identify key objectives, form coalitions, and implement a successful communication strategy to achieve change in Jordan.

The repeal of laws, coined "marry-your-rapist laws" by activists, have seen increasing success in the Middle East and North Africa over the past decade. In one month in 2017, Tunisia (Article 227), Jordan (Article 308), and Lebanon (Article 522) repealed these types of laws. Egypt and Morocco also repealed similar laws prior to 2017. While countries like Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan and Lebanon successfully repealed "marry-your-rapist" laws, some countries in the MENA still recognize these types of laws. For the remainder of this paper, I will use the term abduction-marriage laws to refer to laws, which can allow kidnappers or rapists to avoid legal punishment by marrying their victim. As the chapter will explain, the origin of these laws mainly focused on the abduction of a child from their home, not sexual violation. The laws later expanded to encompass more than just abduction, but for the purposes of this paper I will refer to what activists call "marry-your-rapist laws" as abduction-marriage laws.

This paper centers on women's rights organizations in Jordan. Therefore, the following discussion of Article 308 focuses on activists' interpretation of the law and the effect the law had on women in Jordan. This paper will not attempt to answer the moral

validity of Article 308. It will, instead, focus on how activists believe Article 308 affected their communities and how activists communicated the need to repeal Article 308.

However, before discussing how Article 308 affected women in Jordan, I will briefly introduce the evolution of abduction-marriage laws from the French Penal Code to the laws final form in the Jordanian Penal Code.

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF ARTICLE 308

Discussion of the colonial origin of abduction-marriage laws are sparse in both news and academic source. My first encounters with detailed information about the connection between the French Penal Code, Ottoman Penal Code, and the campaigns against abduction-marriages laws came from independent blogs and interviews with activists. Journalist Rothna Begum, who writes for *Al-Jazeera* and *Human Rights Watch*, highlights that the successful reform of abduction-marriage laws “are credit to the intense campaigning by women’s rights non-governmental organizations in these countries. But, most people are unaware of the colonial origin of such laws in the Middle East and North Africa region.” Begum explores the colonial legacy of Article 308 in an article for *Human Rights Watch* (HRW), she points out that the origin of “marry-your-rapists” laws actually derive from the French colonial penal code, which allowed French men to escape kidnapping prosecution if they married the girl they kidnapped.⁶⁹ The Ottoman Empire adapted this provision into the Ottoman Code and the provision remained in codes throughout the Middle East, even after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Begum points out in her article for *Al-Jazeera*, that France did not repeal the article allowing

⁶⁹ Rothna Begum, “Middle East on a roll to repeal the marry the rapist laws.”

French men to escape kidnapping through marriage until 1994.⁷⁰ Only 5 years after the French, in 1999, Egypt became the first country in the MENA region to repeal a similar article in the Egyptian Penal Code.

So, what caused the support of abduction-marriage laws in local MENA communities, despite their colonial origin and the repeal of the Egyptian abduction-marriage law in 1999? Begum attributes the support of these laws to local patriarchal attitudes and she states:

In many countries, people considered rape survivors "unmarriageable". Some legislators even felt that the laws protected women and girls from being killed by their family members for having sex outside of marriage. Their "solution" led to impunity for rapists but trapped women and girls in unwanted, abusive marriages. It also allowed child marriage in countries that had otherwise set a minimum age of marriage at 18.⁷¹

Local and international activists echo the claims made by Begum. For many women in MENA, the goal is not only to implement legal reform, but also to combat the cultural notion that a woman's honor and value is explicitly tied to her sexual purity. It is also important to point out that the connection between family honor and a women's chastity is not unique or the original product of the cultures of the MENA region. The colonial origin of abduction-marriage laws in the the penal codes of MENA countries and the current resistance to remove these laws reveal that the struggle for gender equality in MENA derives from both a local and international patriarchal legacy.

Tracing the origin of the rape-marriage laws will help us understand how Article 308 in particular became an accepted part of the Jordanian Penal Code for almost 60

⁷⁰ Rothna Begum, "Middle East on a roll to repeal the marry the rapist laws."

⁷¹ Rothna Begum, "Middle East on a roll to repeal the marry the rapist laws."

years. The first abduction-marriage law, identified by scholars, appears in the French Penal Code of 1810, Section VI, Articles 354-356, which state:

354. Any person who by fraud or violence kidnaps or causes to be kidnapped, or displaces, removes or abducts, or causes to be displaced, removed or abducted, any minor from any place where he was placed by a person to whose authority or care he had been entrusted shall be punished by solitary confinement

355. If the kidnapped or abducted minor is under fifteen years of age, the punishment shall be hard labor for life. The same punishment shall be applicable to any person who has received or intends to receive any ransom from the person to whose authority or care the minor, regardless of age has been entrusted; provided however, that in the two preceding paragraphs the punishment shall be hard labor for a limited time, if the minor has been found alive before judgement has been imposed. If the minor has died the death penalty shall be imposed.

356. Any person who without fraud or violence, kidnaps or causes to be abducted, any minor under eighteen years of age shall be punished by jailing from two to five years by a fine of 50,000 to 300,000 francs. If the kidnapped or abducted minor girl marries the perpetrator, prosecution shall be brought only upon charges by persons entitled to procure the nullity of the marriage, and sentence may be imposed only after the nullity has been declared.⁷²

Within the French Penal Code, Articles 354-356 focus on the idea of a minor being abducted from their proper guardian. The specific mention of a female minor does not appear until the discussion about dropping prosecution due to a marriage between the abducted minor and perpetrator. The gender of the victim does not receive attention until the very last line and the sexual violation of the kidnapped victim is not directly addressed. It appears that the main issues Articles 354-356 attempted to address are the removal of a minor from their proper location or guardian or authority. So, does the focus or scope of this abduction-marriage law change between the earlier French and later Ottoman Penal Code? Yes, but the relationship is complex.

⁷² Gerhard O Muerller. Jean F. Moreau, and France, *The French Penal Code* (South Hackensack, N.J: F.B. Rothman, 1960), 120-121.

Scholars warn against framing the Ottoman Penal Code as simply a direct translation of the French Penal Code. Tobias Heinzelmann argues that “the amalgamation of traditional rhetoric and a new terminology turns out to be a successful strategy to legitimize new legal concepts, which include a new relation between *ḳānūn* (ruler’s law) and *ṣerī‘at* (jurist’s law).”⁷³ In the late 18th and early 19th century, the Ottoman Empire reached much of the Middle East and North Africa. The adaptation and new rhetoric of Article 206 in the Ottoman Penal Code helped ground the new state laws in language familiar to subjects of the Ottoman Empire.

According to a translation by John A. Bucknill and Haig Apsighom S. Utidjian, the Ottoman Penal Code of 1911, Part IV, Article 206 states:

206. Whoever by force or fraud carries away a child who has not attained the age of puberty is imprisoned three months to one year; and if the child thus carried away is a girl who has not attained the limit of puberty the abducting person is placed in *kyurek* temporarily; and if the abominable act has been committed on the abducted girl the maximum of the punishment provided for that act is inflicted on those who have perpetrated this and if marriage has taken place in which a girl is carried away, action is taken according to the requirement of the Sher’ in the matter.⁷⁴

Two additions appear in the adaptation of the French Article 357 into the Ottoman Article 206. Firstly, while both laws reference kidnapping both by force or seduction, the Ottoman law adds the idea of “the abominable act”. Bucknill and Utidjian interpret the abominable act to mean “outrage either by the way of natural or unnatural intercourse”.⁷⁵

⁷³ Tobias Heinzelmann, “The Ruler’s Monologue: The Rhetoric of the Ottoman Penal Code of 1858,” *Die Welt Des Islams* 54 (2014): 292–321, doi:10.1163/15700607-05434P02.

⁷⁴ Haig Apsighom S. Utidjian and John A. S. Bucknill, *The Imperial Ottoman Penal Code: A Translation from the Turkish Text, with Latest Additions and Amendments Together with Annotations and Explanatory Commentaries upon the Text and Containing an Appendix Dealing with the Special Amendments in Force in Cyprus and the Judicial Decisions of the Cyprus Courts*, (London: H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1913), 160.

⁷⁵ Utidjian and Bucknill, *The Imperial Ottoman Penal Code*, 160.

Here we see the scope of the law change and include, not only kidnapping, but both kidnapping and sexual violation of a girl who has not yet reached puberty. This is an important step in the expansion from the kidnapping of a minor in the French Penal code to any circumstance of rape found late in the Jordanian Penal code.

Secondly, Article 206 concludes by deferring to the judgment of “the Sher,” which Bucknill and Utjdian define as “Sacred Muslim law.” The involvement of the juridical courts in the legal process provided a new culturally authoritative element to the ruling. The abduction-marriage laws extended beyond the courts of the state and involved local and religious courts. The new cultural relevance may help add to the understanding of why some in the Middle East and North Africa continue to defend state laws that were influenced by colonial legal codes. In Bucknill and Utjdian’s notes on Article 206 they provided the ruling of “the Sher” on the matter of avoiding punishment which reads:

Action is taken according to the Sher’ requirement thereof which means, the handing over of the girl to the man to whom she has married and the consequent acquittal of the abductor; provided always that the admission by the girl of the fact of marriage must not be the result of compulsion exercised on her, and, also, that the girl has not been married to the man by force against her will. If the girl is non-Moslem and if the marriage is disputed then the matter is dealt with in the accordance with the rules and rites of the religion to which the girls belongs.⁷⁶

In the introduction to their translation, Bucknill and Utjdian note that “the Sher” rulings often predated the laws in the Ottoman Penal Code.⁷⁷ In the case of Article 206, they do not indicate when “the Sher” ruling on abduction and marriage took place. However, it does appear that the ruling took place prior to the writing of the 1911 Ottoman Penal Code. In deferring to the “Sher” courts, state laws and religious rulings became affirmed by the other and new circumstances of each case became important. For

⁷⁶ Utjdian and Bucknill, *The Imperial Ottoman Penal Code*, 160.

⁷⁷ Utjdian and Bucknill, *The Imperial Ottoman Penal Code*, x-xi.

example, jurists now consider the religion of the victim and the circumstances of the girl's choice. In the case of the Ottoman Penal Code, sexual violation is referred to as "abominable" and the *şer'at*, or "Sher" courts, require that the marriage be non-compulsory in nature in order for acquittal. In the specific "Sher" court ruling provided by Bucknill and Utijdian, the acquittal of the accused abductor only occurs when the girl admits that the marriage was not forced upon her. While the Ottoman Penal Code expands its scope and discusses circumstances of rape, the ruling by both the government and religious courts only allow acquittal in circumstances of non-compulsory marriage. Without specific case studies, it is difficult to say whether or not the law had beneficial or harmful results for women. It seems that the law's intention was to punish circumstances of abduction and sexual violation if the marriage was the result of compulsion or force. A reading of the Ottoman Penal code reveals that the Ottoman Article 206, while expanding in scope, may have been written in order to protect young girls in circumstances of rape or marriage through abduction or compulsion.

However, the abduction-marriage laws were transformed yet again as they entered into the Jordanian Penal Code of 1960, and the connection between a woman's honor and sexuality became more explicit and expansive. Title VII of the 1960 Penal Code was titled "Offenses against Public Ethics and Morality." Chapter 1 of Title VII was titled "Offenses against Honor" and encompassed the topics of rape, sexual intercourse with women under 18-years-of-age, abduction and seduction. The chapter "Offenses against Honor" details these offenses in 17 articles, numbered from 292-308.

The laws on abduction and seduction appear in Article 302 and share the greatest similarities to the two previously discussed penal codes. Article 302 covers abduction specifically and has very similar language to both the French and Ottoman Penal codes. Article 302 states, "Any person who abducts, by using a ruse or coercion, another person,

whether male or female, and escapes with the abducted person shall be sentenced ...”⁷⁸

The punishment is split into 5 different sections depending on the age, gender, marital status, and if sexual assault occurred after abduction. In Article 302 we see an increased specificity in the legal text about the gender of the victim and nature of the abduction. Additionally, Article 304, which covers “seduction,” states:

“Unless a harsher sentence is deserved, a prison sentence for a period of three (3) months to one (1) year shall be imposed upon any person who deflowers a virgin, who has reached fifteen (15) years of age, after promising to marry her. The perpetrator shall also guarantee her virginity.”

In the first section of Article 304, the importance of a woman’s virginity becomes the concern of the Jordanian legal system because it determines the length of punishment imposed by the state. Activists, often point to laws like Article 304 as perpetuating the idea that woman’s value is connected to her sexual purity, because the length of punishment depends upon a woman’s virginity.

Activists were further frustrated by the fact that prior to August 2017, the first chapter on “Honor” in the Jordanian Penal Code ended with Article 308. Article 308 covered the discontinuation and resumption of legal prosecution for the crimes listed in Chapter 1 and begins with:

If a valid marriage is concluded between the perpetrator of one of the crimes provided in this Chapter and the victim, the prosecution shall be discontinued, and the execution of any sentence rendered against the perpetrator shall be stayed.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ “Jordan Penal Code No. 16 of 1960,” King Hussein Foundation Information and Research Center, date accessed: April 20, 2017, 33, <http://haqqi.info/en/haqqi/legislation/jordanian-penal-code-no-16-1960>.

⁷⁹ King Hussein Foundation Information and Research Center, “Jordan Penal Code No. 16 of 1960,” 33.

Due to Article 308's location at the end of Chapter 1, the law could be applied to circumstances of rape after abduction, like the French and Ottoman Penal codes, but also to any circumstance of rape. Therefore, the scope of the discontinuation of prosecution consequently also increased from specific circumstances of marriage through abduction or rape, to include any circumstance in which rape occurs.

It is easy to read Article 308 and jump to conclusions about the law's original intention. However, it would be biased to assume that the intention of Article 308 was to give rapists a way to avoid punishment for their crime. In fact, scholars point to the importance of the marriage contracts in Muslim countries because they provide a way for women to empower themselves. Dr. Asifa Quraishi, a professor of Islamic law and US constitutional law at the University of Wisconsin, argues that "established fiqh not only insists on the spiritual equality of women and men but it also affords women several significant specific legal rights, most of which went unrecognized in western societies until quite recently. These include the right to consent (or refuse to consent) to marriage, to initiate divorce, to own and inherit property, to maintain exclusive control over one's income and property."⁸⁰ The option to enter into a marriage contract could create an avenue for women to receive financial support in the case of pregnancy or to enter into a marriage contract, if in fact, the sexual encounter was consensual. It is possible in 1960, that these avenues could have been viewed as favorable towards women.

In any case, it is clear that activists believed that Article 308 negatively affected women in Jordan. There are documented cases of women entering into marriage contracts after filing rape charges due to family pressure, and in some circumstances, pressure from

⁸⁰ Asifa Quraishi, "What if Sharia weren't the enemy? Rethinking international women's rights advocacy on Islamic law," *Columbia Journal of Gender and Law* 22, no. 1 (2011): 173, <http://link.galegroup.com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/apps/doc/A276633904/OVIC?u=txshracd2598&sid=OVIC&xid=1049acfd>.

judges. In some of these cases women experienced domestic violence in their marriages.⁸¹ The negative consequences of the expansion and abuse of abduction-marriage laws created the need for women's rights groups to not only discredit the origin of the law, but also prove its incompatibility with relevant social values and national identity. Thus, the official campaign to fully repeal Article 308 began.

THE OFFICIAL CAMPAIGN TO REPEAL ARTICLE 308

In 2015 the Jordanian Parliament approved amendments to the 1960 Penal Code. The amendments included limiting the application of Article 308. However, the amendments still allowed for Article 308's implementation in cases of adultery or instances where the victims were 15 to 18 years-old and the act was considered consensual.⁸² Activists in Jordan were not satisfied with the amendments and called for the entire removal of Article 308.

As discussed in the introduction, the support of the Royal Family in Jordan provides both opportunities and barriers for women's rights organizations in Jordan. In the case of Article 308, the support of the Royal Family proved beneficial. The Royal Committee for Developing the Judiciary and Enhancing the Rule of Law (RCDJERL) recommended the abolishment of Article 308. King Abdullah II supported the recommendation. Media outlets referred to the recommendation as a "response to

⁸¹ In an interview with the *Jordan Times* a woman named Um Hassan details her experience after filing rape charges against a former employer. After the rape resulted in a pregnancy, pressure from the judge in her case and her family, she decided to enter into a marriage contract with her accused rapist. According to Um Hassan the man she married continued to physically assault her. Jassar Al-Tahat, "I was more of a victim of Article 308 than my rapist," *The Jordan Times*, May 14, 2017, <http://jordantimes.com/news/local/i-was-more-victim-article-308-my-rapist%E2%80%9999>.

⁸² Rana Husseini, "Women activists call for canceling controversial Penal Code article entirely," *The Jordan Times*, May 24, 2015, <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/women-activists-call-cancelling-controversial-penal-code-article-entirely%E2%80%9999>.

activists' long time demands."⁸³ In the case of Article 308, the support of the Royal Family and RCDJERL helped begin the official legal process for the repeal of the article.

So, how does the repeal of Article 308 align with the key objectives of women's rights group outlined in Chapter 2 of this study? The full repeal of Article 308 aligns perfectly with three important objectives of women's rights groups, ending gender-based violence, legal reform and encouraging political engagement. First, the repeal removed a legal loop-hole that allowed perpetrators of violence against women to avoid prosecution. By repealing the Article 308, women's rights organizations continued their mission of eliminating gender-based violence in Jordan through the reformation of the legal code. Second, the campaign against Article 308 encouraged women to engage politically in Jordan. Activists organized many protests and sit-ins. This form of political engagement aimed to convince political officials to act on the repeal of Article 308. The alignment of the repeal with women's organizations key objectives caused women's organizations to gather together and form a coalition. Leaders of Sisterhood is Global, The Jordanian National Commission for Women, and the Arab Women's Association spoke to the media and encouraged the repeal of Article 308. In addition, members from multiple women's organizations participated in organized protests outside of the Jordanian Parliament building. Women's rights organizations provided a united front and demanded the repeal of Article 308.

Chapter 3 of this study addressed many of the rhetorical strategies found in the campaign materials and messaging of Article 308. In the case of Article 308, the ideas of national identity and social values played an important role in campaign messaging. As discussed, throughout the campaign, both opponents and supporters of the repeal used the

⁸³ Rana Husseini, "Royal committee responds to women's advocates' long time demands" *The Jordan Times*, February 26, 2017, <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/royal-committee-responds-women-advocates%E2%80%99-long-time-demands>.

language of social values. Opponents of a full repeal appealed to the idea of “family values” and encouraged keeping the article because it supported women and the family. Again, the opponents reasoning stems from the idea that a woman’s most important role is found in the family. Women’s organizations used messaging in their campaign against Article 308, which rejected the idea that Article 308 protected families. The campaign video from SIGI used images of a burning home and a distraught child to depict the consequences of Article 308. The video also used the testimony of medical experts to show the negative psychological consequences of beginning a family dynamic (marriage) with a violent action like rape. Instead of disregarding the importance of family values, women’s organizations appreciated their importance and chose to demonstrate that Article 308 actually endangered the growth of healthy family units.

Male Parliament members who opposed the full repeal of Article 308, also used the language of “a national obligation.” The combining of nationalism and family values remains prevalent in the discussion of women’s rights in MENA today. The statements of Parliament members about Article 308 demonstrated the connection between the of protection women, and therefore the family, as a source of national pride. Again, women’s rights organizations were not deterred by this messaging. Instead women’s organizations communicated the idea that most Jordanians supported a full repeal. The campaign video from SIGI highlighted statistics, polled form Jordanians, demonstrating overwhelming support for the repeal of the bill. In addition to the clear statistics, the video featured Jordanians, both women and men, saying “I support the repeal of Article 308” in Arabic. The video demonstrated to political officials that Jordanians supported a full repeal of Article 308 and public opinion was on the side of the women’s organizations.

THE FULL REPEAL OF ARTICLE 308

So, did the messaging of women's organizations gain the support of local media and Jordanian citizens? The answer is a resounding, yes. Local media coverage of Article 308 highlighted the united front of women's organizations throughout the campaign. Local newspaper, *Al-Rai*, published over 35 articles between March 2015 and April 2017 about the repeal of Article 308. One article featured a press release by Sisterhood is Global and highlighted SIGI's involvement in recommending the repeal to the Royal Committee, the committee that officially proposed the repeal.⁸⁴ Additionally, *Al-Rai* used SIGI's social media photos to announce SIGI's support of the governments recommendation to repeal Article 308.⁸⁵ *Al-Rai's* usage of SIGI's strategically crafted press releases and social media posts shows the success of their communications strategy in engaging local media. *Ad-Dustour's* coverage of 308 quotes a joint statement put out by a coalition of women's organizations in Jordan.⁸⁶ These organizations include SIGI, JNCW and JWU. The article demonstrates that women's organizations in Jordan do not work in isolation to influence the media story, but coordinate with each other for initiatives and campaigns. The coordination by women's organizations puts forth an image of a strong and united community that supports gender equality in Jordan.

The campaign not only gained the support of local media outlet, but also gained the attention of international media and human rights groups. The first chapter introduced examples of international organizations, like *CNN*, *The Guardian*, *Human Rights Watch*,

⁸⁴ Al-Rai News, "(Solidarity) and the Civil Alliance offer opinion on Article (308)," *Al-Rai.com*, January 2, 2017, <http://alrai.com/article/10373265/>.

⁸⁵ Al-Rai News. "Solidarity welcomes the Jordanian government's intention to abolish Article 308/ Penalties completely," *Al-Rai.com*, April 18, 2017, <http://alrai.com/article/10386732/>.

⁸⁶ A. Al-Sah, "٣٣ منظمة نسائية وحقوق إنسان تطالب مجلس الأمة بالغاء المادة (٣٠٨)," *Ad Dustour.com*, July 30, 2017, <http://www.addustour.com/articles/968070>.

and *the New York Times*, reporting on the repeal of Article 308. The coverage demonstrates the momentum and support for the campaign not only locally, but worldwide. The coverage by international organization's also highlights the inclusive nature of the women's rights movement in Jordan. Political leaders and activists shared the story of their success with major international media outlets, which allowed them to guide the narrative women's rights in Jordan and celebrate the success of women's organizations on an international scale.

The full repeal of Article 308 demonstrates how women's organizations tackle some of their most important issues in Jordan. First women's organizations establish the issue in the mind of the public through local media coverage and gain the financial and resource support of international organizations. After bringing the issue to the attention of Jordanians, women's organizations prove popular support with campaign materials featuring with quotes, statistical data, and stories that appeal to important social values in Jordan. Using an inclusive approach to advocacy women's organizations combine international funding, local media coverage, and organizing grassroots demonstrations, to influence political, legislative, and social leaders to address their demands.

Conclusion

This study ends in the same place it began, with the successful repeal of Article 308. This thesis revealed how women's organization navigated complex, historical, social, and political circumstances, in order to create social change in Jordan. Chapter 1 established the barriers and opportunities facing women's organizations in Jordan. The relationship with both international donors and the Jordanian Royal Family provided opportunities for funding and support, but at times restricted the autonomy and decision making processes of women's organizations. The coalition against Article 308 represented how women's organizations turn what may have been barriers into opportunities. International donors provided the funding for campaign materials and wide-ranging media coverage and the Jordanian Royal Family helped kick start the official legal repeal process of Article 308.

Chapter 2 established three of the key objectives for women's organizations in Jordan. These three objectives include: ending gender-based violence, implementing legal reform, and creating civic engagement opportunities for women. Article 308 represented an opportunity to touch on each of the three objectives. The repeal of Article 308 meant the removal of a law, that activists believed, condoned gender-based violence. In addition, the campaign gave women the opportunity for civic engagement through organized protests and educational seminars. With so many major objectives on the line, women's organizations used an inclusive, coalition-building approach to ensure the success of their campaign. The coalition presented a united front to help influence the opinion of international and local media, political figures, and the Jordanian public.

A large number of Jordanians support the larger ideal of gender equality, but show more hesitation when that ideal directly influences political or economic policies.⁸⁷ Women's organizations have a foundation to begin promoting gender equality, but must carefully craft and propose their strategies for female empowerment. After getting the attention of the media, politicians and Jordanians, women's organizations needed to tactfully communicate the need to repeal of Article 308. Chapter 3, analyzed the campaign messaging of Article 308. Both supporters and opponents of 308 used the rhetoric of national pride and positive family values. Women's organizations did not shy away from the ideas of family values or national pride. Campaign materials from women's organizations featured stories, images, testimonials and authoritative spokespeople, to demonstrate how a repeal of Article 308 would create strong families and stronger communities in Jordan.

After creating their campaign messages, women's organizations strategically placed their messages. The use of traditional media helped legitimize the goal to repeal Article 308 in Jordanian society. Women's organizations used social media to coordinate local campaign efforts, invite their communities to events, and connect the women's rights movement in Jordan to the larger call for women's rights around the globe. The campaign against Article 308 used platforms like YouTube and Facebook to create and promote content. The placement of campaign messaging in traditional media and on social media demonstrates women's organizations ability to speak to a variety of demographics within Jordanian society. Chapter 3 concluded by evaluating the success of the women's organizations' communication strategy. Women's organizations had their message frequently and favorably distributed to the Jordanian public. Local news outlets

⁸⁷ Pew Research Center, *Global Attitudes Project. Most Muslims Want Democracy, Personal Freedoms and Islam in Political Life*, 4.

reproduced or shared joint statements from the coalition against Article 308, wrote news pieces on the campaign that favored women's organizations, and shared social media content from women's organizations.

Chapter 4 explored the evolution of abduction-marriage laws from the French and Ottoman Penal Codes into Article 308 of the Jordanian Penal Code and provided insight into why some in the MENA region continue to support abduction-marriage laws. An ignorance about the colonial origin of Article 308, the combining of both state and religious rulings in abduction-marriage cases in the Ottoman Penal Code of 1911, and local and international patriarchal attitudes may indicate why Article 308 took almost 60 years to repeal. In the end, women's organizations successfully communicated to the Jordanian public and political officials that Article 308 no longer aligned with the values of Jordanian society and on August 1, 2017, they celebrated the official abolishment of Article 308.

This thesis has demonstrated that women's organization in Jordan possess the resourcefulness, ingenuity, and autonomy, which allows them to that successfully create political, social, and ideological change in Jordan. Women's organizations would not have found the same success in the repeal of Article 308 without their demonstrated engagement with and knowledge of Jordanian communities. The ability to innovatively navigate the social complexities of Jordanian society makes organizations like the Arab Women's Association of Jordan, the Jordanian Women's Union, and Sisterhood is Global-Jordan a vital part of the historical narrative and the dynamic future of the women's rights movement in the Middle East and beyond.

Appendix A: List AWO and SIGI Donor/Partners by Geography

List by Geography of Donors/Partner for AWO and SIGI				
Organazation Name	Region	Headquarters	AWO	SIGI
Acted	European	France	x	
American Bar Association (ABA)	North American	United States		x
British Council	North American	United States		x
Canadian Embassy	North American	Canada		x
Collective for Research & Training on Development -Action (CRTDA)	MENA	Lebanon		x
Conemund	European	Spain	x	
Embassy of the Netherlands	European	The Netherlands		x
European Union (EU)	European	Belgium		x
Freidrich Naumann Stiftung Foundation	European	Germany		x
Global Fund for Women	North American	United States	x	
Heartland Allaince	North American	United States		x
Heinrich Boll Stiftung	European	Germany	x	
IM	European	Sweden	x	
International Refugee Committee (IRC)	North American	United States	x	
Kvinna till Kvinna (KvK)	European	Sweden	x	x
Mama Cash	European	The Netherlands		x
" She" Program برنامج "هي"	MENA	Egypt	x	
Open Soceity Foundation	North American	United States	x	
Oxfam	European	United Kingdom		x
Psycho-Social Counseling Center for Women	MENA	Palestine		x
Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID)	European	Spain	x	
Surgir	European	Switzerland		x
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	MENA	Jordan	x	x
Unicef	North American	United States	x	x
United Nations	North American	United States	x	x
USAID	North American	United States		x
Women's Learning Partnership (WLP)	North American	United States		x
Womens League for Peace & Freedom	European	Switzerland	x	
Karama كرامة	MENA	Egypt	x	
International Union for Conservation of Nature	European	Switzerland	x	
Arab Network for Civic Education الشبكة العربية للتربية المدنية	MENA	Jordan	x	
Euromed Feminist Initiative	European	France	x	

Appendix B: 2016 Financial Statement SIGI

جمعية معهد تضامن النساء الأردني عشان - المنظمة الأردنية الهاشمية إيضاحات حول القوائم المالية

10- إيرادات ومصاريف المشروع

يتألف هذا البند مما يلي :

السنة الحالية	مشروع البحث والتدريب للنساء (WLP)	مشروع مساعدات عاجلة (سرجين)	مشروع IREX	مشروع ورشة عمل (Citda)	مشروع حماية النساء في خطر (K T K)	مشروع Care	مشروع CFLI	مشروع Asambleade Coope	2016
دينار أردني	دينار أردني	دينار أردني	دينار أردني	دينار أردني	دينار أردني	دينار أردني	دينار أردني	دينار أردني	دينار أردني
194,330	869	15,412	6,640	28,667	961	83,241	16,372	42,168	
194,330	869	15,412	6,640	28,667	961	83,241	16,372	42,168	
22,567	-	-	-	20,230	-	-	-	2,337	
56,226	-	-	-	-	56,226	-	-	-	
28,241	-	-	-	4,928	-	-	-	23,313	
19,210	-	-	-	2,655	-	-	1,900	14,655	
1,863	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,863	
2,570	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2,116	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,570	-	
540	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,116	-	
1,292	-	-	-	937	-	-	540	-	
1,394	-	-	-	1,394	-	-	355	-	
7,140	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
143,159	-	-	-	30,144	500	56,226	7,481	42,168	
51,171	869	8,772	6,640	(1,477)	461	27,015	8,891	-	

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